

STAR WARS
THE
MANDALORIAN

**ALL YOUR FAVORITE MUSIC FROM SEASON ONE
AVAILABLE ON YOUR PREFERRED MUSIC SERVICE**



**SEASON TWO SOUNDTRACK
COMING SOON**



200TH
ISSUE

FROM A NEW HOPE TO THE MANDALORIAN – AND BEYOND!

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE | ISSUE 200

STAR WARS

I N S I D E R

Exclusive Interviews:
IAN McDIARMID
Emperor Palpatine

THE HIGH REPUBLIC'S
CHARLES SOULE

Princesses of Alderaan
The many voices of Leia Organa

Insider Exclusive:
All-New Star Wars Fiction!

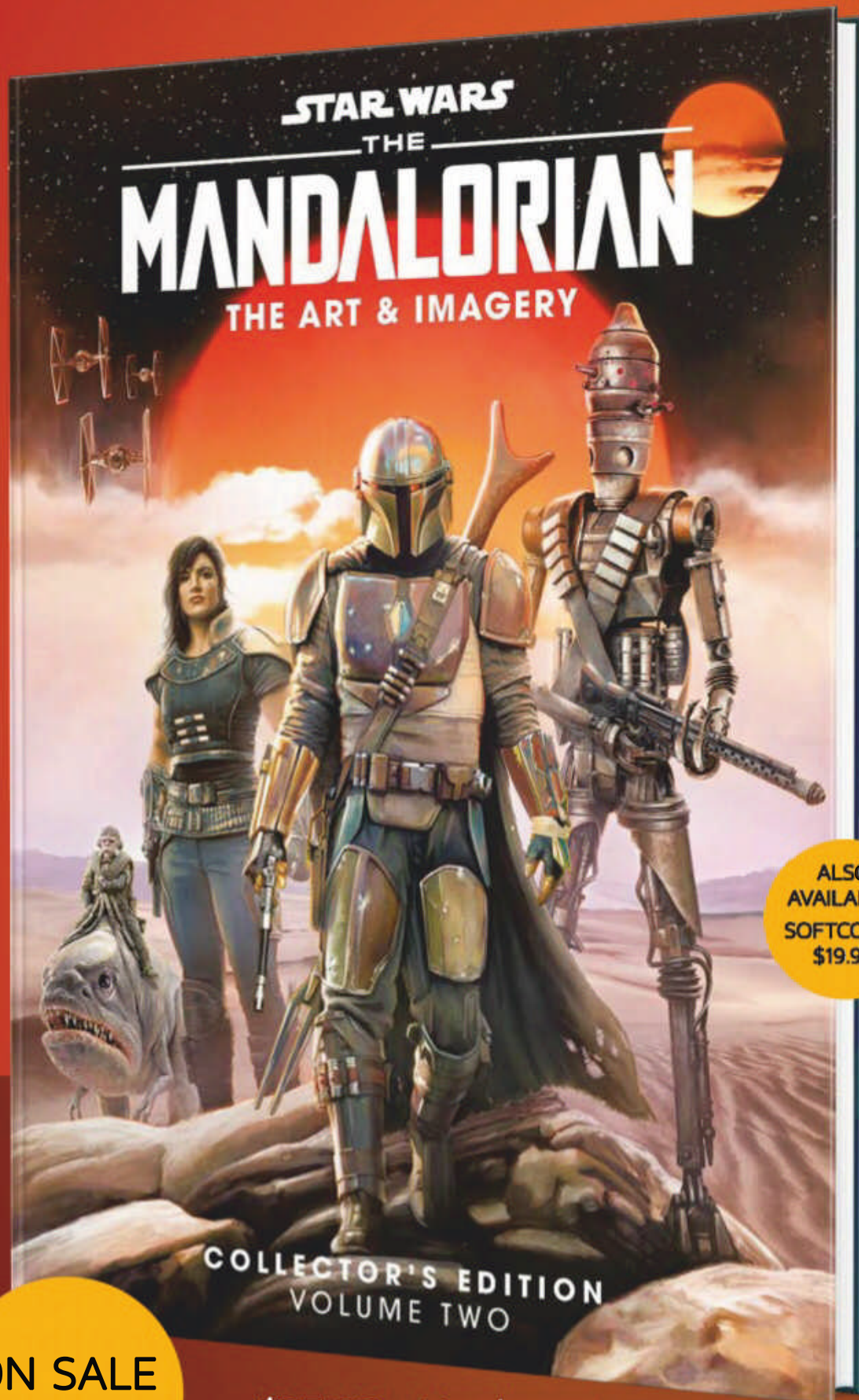
Special Introduction by
ANTHONY DANIELS

"THIS IS THE WAY"

2000

Reasons we love *Star Wars*

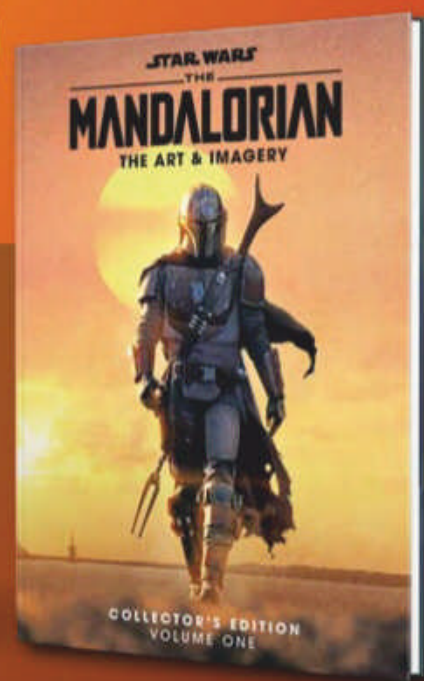
EXPLORE THE INCREDIBLE WORLD OF THE MANDALORIAN



ON SALE
NOW!

\$25.99 | Hardcover
ISBN: 9781787735750

ALSO
AVAILABLE:
SOFTCOVER
\$19.99



VOLUME 1
ON SALE
NOW!

AVAILABLE IN ALL GOOD STORES AND ONLINE

TITAN-COMICS.COM



© & TM 2021 Lucasfilm Ltd.



WELCOME...



To paraphrase that crazy old hermit, Ben Kenobi: “*Bantha Tracks* is a title I’ve not heard for a long time. A long time.” Like many *Star Wars Insider* readers of a similar vintage, I was once a card-carrying member of The Official *Star Wars* Fanclub, in those long-ago days when *Bantha Tracks* was its quarterly newsletter. Whenever a new edition arrived through the mail, I’d thrill at the exciting *Star Wars* news contained within, and I still have every copy I ever received—stored in a lovingly crafted shoebox archive decorated with stickers and a hand-drawn version of the newsletter logo. Banthas are pretty hard to draw in felt-tip pen, right?

I would never have imagined that years later I’d be the editor of its spiritual successor, especially on the occasion of *Insider’s* 200th edition, at a time when *Star Wars* is bigger than ever. To be a part of this decades-long publishing legacy is more than an honor, and my hope is that each new issue thrills you all as much as *Bantha Tracks* did me back in the day.

So, join us as we celebrate 200 issues of *Star Wars Insider* with 200 reasons why we love *Star Wars*, and speak to former editors about the passion that goes into every issue. There’s a special one-off Wonder Column from goldenrod himself, Anthony Daniels; Ian McDiarmid talks exclusively about slipping back into the Emperor’s robes for *Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker* (2019); and there’s an all-new installment of *The High Republic* fiction by Charles Soule. Impressive. Most impressive.

May the Force be with you.

Christopher Cooper
Editor

TITAN EDITORIAL

Editor / Christopher Cooper
Managing Editor / Martin Eden
Assistant Editor / Phoebe Hedges
Senior Designer / Andrew Leung

LUCASFILM

Senior Editor / Brett Rector
Art Director / Troy Alders
Creative Director / Michael Siglain
Asset Management / Erik Sanchez,
Bryce Pinkos, Nicole LaCoursiere,
Sarah Williams, Shahana Alam
Story Group / Pablo Hidalgo,
Leland Chee, Matt Martin

CONTRIBUTORS

Kristin Baver, Dan Brooks, Anthony Daniels,
Michael Kogge, Mark Newbold,
Amy Richau, Charles Soule,
Jay Stobie, and Dan Wallace.

SPECIAL THANKS TO

Lucy Goldsmith, Erich Schoeneweiss
at Random House, Holly McIntosh, Joseph
Taraborrelli, Andrea Towers and Jim Nasedas
at Marvel Comics, Lizzy Draeger, Tracy
Cannobbio and Chris Argyropoulos
at Lucasfilm. Chris Troise and Eugene
Paraszczuk at Disney.

TITAN MAGAZINES

Production Controller / Caterina Falqui
Senior Production Controller / Jackie Flook
Art Director / Oz Browne
Sales & Circulation Manager / Steve Tothill
Marketing & Advertisement Assistant / Lauren Noding
Sales & Marketing Coordinator / George Wickenden
Publicist / Imogen Harris
Head Of Rights / Jenny Boyce
Acquisitions Editor / Duncan Baizley
Publishing Director / Ricky Claydon
Publishing Director / John Dziewiatkowski
Operations Director / Leigh Baulch
Publishers / Vivian Cheung & Nick Landau

DISTRIBUTION

US Newsstand / Total Publisher Services, Inc.
John Dziewiatkowski 630-851-7683
US Newsstand Distribution / Curtis Circulation
Company
US Bookstore Distribution / The News Group
US Direct Sales / Diamond Comic Distributors
UK Distribution / Marketforce

SUBSCRIPTIONS

U.S. subscriptions / 1-800-261-6502,
email: customerservice@titanpublishingusa.com
Canada subscriptions / 818-487-4575
U.K. subscriptions / 01778 392085
email: swmag@servicehelpline.co.uk

For more info on advertising contact
adinfo@titanemail.com

STAR WARS INSIDER FEB/MAR 2021
(USPS 003-027) (ISSN 1041-5122)

Star Wars Insider is published eight times per year
(January, March, April, May/June, July, August/September,
October, November/December) by Titan Magazines,
a division of Titan Publishing Group Limited,
144 Southwark Street, London SE1 0UP.
Contents © 2019 Lucasfilm Ltd. & TM. All Rights Reserved.
Titan Authorized User. TMN14011

PUBLISHER'S U.S. AGENT
2819 Rosehall Lane, Aurora, IL 60503. Periodicals
Postage Paid at Aurora IL and at additional
mailing offices.

POSTMASTER
Send address changes to *Star Wars Insider*,
PO Box 18479, Anaheim, CA 92817-8479
U.S. subscriptions \$49.99 per year; Canada \$64.99 and U.K. £31.99.
U.S. edition printed by Quad.

© 2021 Lucasfilm Ltd. and TM All Rights Reserved.
Used Under Authorization.

MEET THE CONTRIBUTORS...



Jay Stobie
[@StobiesGalaxy](#)

Starship fanatic and blogger Jay writes articles for *StarWars.com* and is searching for a way to reside full time in the *Star Wars* galaxy.



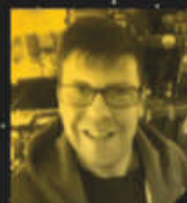
Amy Richau
[@amyrichau](#)

Amy is a regular contributor to *StarWars.com*, and is the author of *Star Wars: I Love You, I know: Lessons in Love and Friendship*.



Kristin Baver
[@KristinBaver](#)

Kristin was a card-carrying *Star Wars* fan before she had reason to own a wallet. Now she's an associate editor at *StarWars.com*.



Mark Newbold
[@Prefect_timing](#)

A writer for U.K. sci-fi magazine *Starburst* and *Star Trek* magazine, journalist Mark is a proud Honorary Friend of the 501st and Rebel Legion.



Michael Kogge
[@michaelkogge](#)

Michael is the author of the junior novelization of *Star Wars: The Force Awakens*, and the *Star Wars Rebels* chapter book series.



Charles Soule
[@CharlesSoule](#)

Charles is one of the architects of *Star Wars: The High Republic*, and has written many *Star Wars* comic books for Marvel Comics.

CONTACT US

Write to us

UNITED STATES
Star Wars Insider,
Titan Magazines,
2819 Rosehall
Lane, Aurora, IL,
60503, U.S.A.

UNITED KINGDOM
Star Wars Insider,
144 Southwark
Street, London
SE1 0UP,
U.K.

Email us:

starwarsinsider@titanemail.com

Call us

To subscribe in the U.S. please
call toll free on 800-261-6502.
For U.K. and all other
destinations please call
01778 392085 or
+44 (0) 1778 392085

Find us

[WWW](#) WWW.TITANMAGAZINES.COM

[f](#) [FACEBOOK.COM/STARWARSINSIDER](https://www.facebook.com/starwarsinsider)

[t](#) [@SW_INSIDER](https://twitter.com/sw_insider)

Star Wars Insider
is also available online.
To download, visit:
[www.titanmagazines.com/
digital](http://www.titanmagazines.com/digital)

Visit www.starwars.com



Anthony Daniels' 200th(ish) Wonder Column

The C-3PO actor's legendary Wonder Column makes a special one-off return, in this celebration of *Star Wars Insider's* 200th issue.

The big question has always been, "Is it hot in the costume?"

I had a simple answer (and after a long day, a rather curt one), "Usually."

But in recent years

I am often faced with a somewhat more difficult inquiry. I don't really know how to answer it.

I think it's actually a question of perspective.

The many millions of *Star Wars* fans around our planet have watched, observed, enjoyed each episode of the saga on variously sized screens, from a certain point of view. Though the series' main impact has been through the movies, it's been filled-out with documentaries, novels, and jottings; most notoriously, *The Wonder Column* (are you old enough to remember?), that I was proud to write for *Star Wars Insider* magazine so many years ago.

I never realized that it might be a rehearsal for a later, larger effort on my part—uncertain the future was... is.

So, thanks to William Caxton (stay with me here), George Lucas' original notion has re-iterated itself in all forms of communication—okay, not six million, but a worthy start. The printed word has been a strong contributor to everyone's enjoyment—the move from vellum and parchment to binary code and Kindle easing the process on the way. Progress. But always there, the story is. A spark to the imagination and an inspiration. How many lives have

changed, careers started, romances bloomed (Mendelssohn often knocked off the piano stool by John Williams' stunning "Main Theme"; the "Imperial March," a riskier choice, portending stormy times and attorneys' fees ahead), because of an idea?

A bigger question. Who is the Maker? Well, swamp my inbox with irrational and feeble insults from the anonymity of your keyboard, but it

"It was the idea that started it all; an idea that turned into a word on a page, that turned into a film on a screen."

might just be the big "G" himself (that's... erm, George Lucas... if you are still having difficulty following my train of thought). It was he who first thought about it all. There's a certain book which starts, "In the beginning was the Word." In his case it was the *idea* that started it all; an idea that turned into a word on a page, that turned into a film on a screen and... and... and... (You still there?) ... and yes, turned, for your further delight, into a stuffed Ewok—in my case, a golden Beanie Baby—to hug in the privacy of your home. But it turned into so much more.

And the big "more" is *you*... my reader here... the fan... the person in the room where it happened. The fans that demanded a second film and a third and... well, anyway... But for you it happened on a screen in the room. You weren't there on the day when it *actually* happened. In the desert. In the oil bath. In a plywood box pretending to be the cockpit of the beloved *Millennium Falcon*. I was there. That was my job. My experience. My involvement. Close up and personal.

And then it became big. And bigger. And huge. *Star Wars* became a colossal phenomenon. It was no moon. It was bigger than our planet. But my nose had been up close, all the way. If you put your face near the ground you have no concept how huge and wonderful our planet is. And that's me. You were able to appreciate the saga from a distance. Objectively. From a different perspective. I don't have that luxury (there have been compensations).

So you might help me answer the question...

What's it like to have been in all the *Star Wars* movies?

Because... I don't know.

I don't have the words

Help me. You are my only hope.

AD

P.S.

Thank the Maker.

P.P.S.

And you.

Why not follow Anthony on Instagram @anthonydanielsofficial and Twitter @ADaniels3PO and of course, read *I Am C-3PO: The Inside Story* from DK Books





STAR WARS INSIDER CONTENTS

ISSUE 200 / MARCH 2021

200th Issue!

Celebrating 33 years of the official
Star Wars Magazine





NEWSSTAND
EDITION



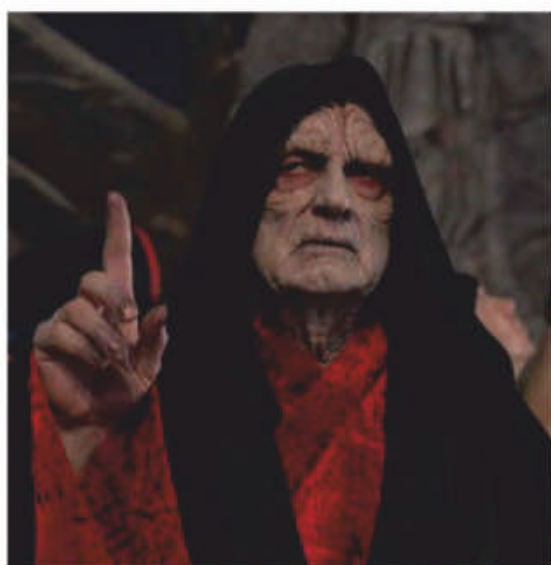
COMIC STORE
EXCLUSIVE



SUBSCRIBER
EXCLUSIVE



Art by Peach Momoko



04

Anthony Daniels

The C-3PO actor's special 200th issue Wonder Column!

08

Launchpad

Insider's roundup of the latest movie, merch, and publishing news.

22

200 Reasons

Why we love the *Star Wars* saga, as told by cast, crew, and celebrity fans.

30

Ian McDiarmid Interview

The actor behind Palpatine's plotting on playing the most evil bad guy ever!



36

Our *Star Wars* Stories

How the inspiring documentary series celebrates the world of *Star Wars* fans.

42

Princesses of Alderaan

Insider talks exclusively to six actors who have voiced Princess Leia Organa.

48

Unlimited power!

Marking our 200th issue, former *Insider* editors reflect on the magazine's history.

56

The Clone Wars Season 7

Our guide to the twelve epic episodes that concluded the groundbreaking series.



64

Ira Keeler Interview

The model shop veteran on his 20-year career at Industrial Light & Magic.

70

Charles Soule Interview

The *Star Wars* journey of the *High Republic* author and comic-book scribe.

78

A Certain Point of View

Star Wars expert Michael Kogge answers *Insider* readers' galactic queries.

90

Exclusive Fiction

Part Two of Charles Soule's *Star Wars: The High Republic* short story.

INCOMING TRANSMISSIONS

55

Prize Giveaway!

Win a trio of *The Mandalorian* Black Series action figures from Hasbro.

80

Worldwide

Star Wars fan art and creativity, plus crafting inspiration in TK-101.

86

The *Star Wars* Archive

Behind-the-scenes images that tell the story of the making of a saga.

96

Jedi Master's Quiz

Lock S-foils in attack position and test your starfighter knowledge.

LAUNCHPAD

NEWS / BOOKS / COMICS / TOYS / GAMES / FASHION



David Prowse MBE

Star Wars Insider editor Christopher Cooper remembers the Darth Vader actor

When I was around ten-years old, Darth Vader visited my London primary school. He was dressed in a white and green jumpsuit with broad epaulets and a giant green cross on his chest. During that morning's assembly he spoke to us (in an unfamiliar accent) about road safety, using the alias The Green Cross Code Man.

The *Star Wars* fans in the main hall that day recognized him as Dave Prowse, the man who had recently terrified us all as the Dark Lord of the Sith in *Star Wars: A New Hope* (1977). As Vader, Prowse was the most feared being in the cosmos, but as The Green Cross Code Man—a superhero who, in a series of public information films, taught kids how to cross the road

safely—he was one of the most trusted figures in the U.K. It was a role that Prowse was proud to have played, describing it as “the best job I ever had.” The character’s huge appeal and simple message undoubtedly saved many young lives.

A giant of a man, Prowse was born in Bristol, England. He made a name for himself as a bodybuilder,



Images courtesy of Lucasfilm



and represented his country as a weightlifter at the Commonwealth Games during the 1960s. Taking advantage of his physique, Prowse carved out a career as an actor, playing assorted heavies and henchmen on British TV before landing the role of the Green Cross Code Man. Prowse's other notable parts included Julian in Stanley Kubrick's *A Clockwork Orange*

(1971), and Mary Shelley's infamous Monster in Hammer Films' *The Horror of Frankenstein* (1970) and its sequel, *Frankenstein and the Monster from Hell* (1974).

Offered a choice of roles in *Star Wars* by George Lucas, the 6-foot 7-inch-tall Prowse famously chose to play Vader over Chewbacca because, "you always remember the bad guys."

Despite what he may have thought, it isn't just the bad guys we remember. It's the good guys too. R.I.P. Dave Prowse.

As this issue of *Star Wars Insider* went to press, we learned of the passing of Boba Fett actor Jeremy Bulloch. We extend our deepest sympathies to his family.



Star Wars Steps Up a Gear!

Disney and Lucasfilm map out the near future of the *Star Wars* galaxy

M

ake a note in your calendars. The next *Star Wars* feature film will arrive in theaters in December 2023!

Rogue Squadron, to be directed by Patty Jenkins, was announced by Lucasfilm president Kathleen Kennedy at a Walt Disney Company event in December. But that wasn't the only revelation to be made that day, as a host of new *Star Wars* shows for Disney+ were also made public.

Jon Favreau and Dave Filoni will be executive producing two dramas set in the same time period as *The Mandalorian*, with the live-action *Ahsoka* series, starring Rosario Dawson,

to be written by Filoni himself. Meanwhile, *Rangers of the New Republic* will intersect with future *Mandalorian* adventures and culminate in a climactic story event.

The already announced series focusing on Diego Luna's character from 2016's *Rogue One: A Star Wars Story* has also been given a name. Created by Tony Gilroy, and described as a tense, nail-biting spy thriller, *Andor* will land on Disney+ in 2022.

Obi-Wan Kenobi, in which Ewan McGregor reprises his iconic role for a special event series for Disney+, is set to begin filming in 2021. Joining McGregor will be Hayden Christensen,

playing Darth Vader in the series to be directed by Deborah Chow. Lando Calrissian will also return in his own event series, *Lando*, currently in development by Justin Simien.

Other shows in the pipeline include *The Acolyte*, created by Leslye Headland, a *Star Wars* mystery-thriller set during the final days of The High Republic era. *Star Wars: Visions* will see a new take on the galaxy from the world's leading anime creators, while Industrial Light & Magic team with Lucasfilm Animation to develop the epic new adventure film *A Droid Story*. All this and *The Bad Batch* are on their way too. The Force is with us!



Rosario Dawson as Ahsoka Tano in *The Mandalorian* Season Two.



Star Wars: The Bad Batch picks up the story of Clone Force 99.



Bunk down
in a *Star Wars*
experience like
no other.

A Room With A View

Disney Parks gives a sneak peek inside the Galactic Starcruiser

The first images of one of the completed cabins aboard the *Hyperion*—the ambitious *Star Wars*-themed accommodation experience currently under construction at Walt Disney World Resort in Florida—were released

by Disney Parks in November, showing a comfortably appointed cabin rich with *Star Wars* detail.

The futuristic suite (from a long time ago, in a galaxy far, far away of course!) offers a comfortable queen-sized double bed and cool built-in

bunks for younger passengers, along with a viewport looking out into the depths of space.

The *Hyperion* is expected to lift off in 2021. Until then, you can scan for the latest news and updates at disney Parks.disney.go.com/blog.

One Giant Leap for Mando Kind

The Child blasts into orbit

Quite what his taciturn clan of two companion would have to say on the matter we don't know, but the mischievous former Jedi padawan from *The Mandalorian* recently blasted into Earth's orbit to spend some time aboard the International Space Station.



Image courtesy of NASA

Joining the crew of the SpaceX Dragon spacecraft that rocketed to the ISS on November 16, the Child (in plush form) had a key role to play on the NASA mission, serving as the ship's

“zero gravity indicator”—usually a soft toy that is allowed to float freely in the cabin to indicate the point at which Earth's gravity no longer exerts an influence on the spaceship.

What we don't know is if macarons were on the astronaut's lunch menu?



A Darth Vader replica to melt your mind.

Endor-se The Dark Side

Reclaim the ashes of the Empire

When Kylo Ren doubted his commitment to the dark side in *Star Wars: The Force Awakens* (2015), he invoked the spirit of his grandfather by consulting Darth Vader's charred helmet, salvaged from his funeral pyre on Endor's Forest Moon.

The imagery of Vader's hideously twisted yet recognizable and still iconic headwear connected the latest trilogy with the original, and EFX has harnessed the powerful emotions it evoked (in fans as much as Kylo Ren!) to produce the stunning Darth Vader "Pyre" Helmet Replica.

Made on a 1:1 scale, the extensively researched collectible was crafted using information obtained from the prop's creators to replicate the mask as seen in the movie. The limited edition collectible is priced at \$1,599, and comes with a themed base featuring a numbered metal plaque.

THE LIGHT SIDE

By Jamie Cosley



The StarWars DotColumn

Fascinating features and articles from the digital vaults of StarWars.com

Add StarWars.com/Insider to your browser bookmarks to enjoy *Insider's* pick of the best of the official *Star Wars* website.

"All Films Are Personal": An Oral History Of *Star Wars: The Phantom Menace* (1999)

The creators and artists behind the first film in the prequel trilogy, including George Lucas, Doug Chiang, John Knoll, and others, look back at the making of the movie, 20 years later.



Interview: Ben Burtt

The sound designer takes StarWars.com behind the scenes with stories of the many real-world audio clips that became some of the most enduring creatures, vehicles, and background sounds in the saga.



Star Wars: Squadrons

Industrial Light & Magic's John Knoll, Lucasfilm's James Waugh, and EA's Neel Upadhye talk to StarWars.com about the *Star Wars: Squadrons* short film "Hunted," a new kind of *Star Wars* story set prior to the events of the video game.



Mando Goes Retro

The Mandalorian Action figures with an old school look

Filled to the brim with easter eggs and references to the original *Star Wars* trilogy, *The Mandalorian* is no stranger to the power of nostalgia. That theme continues with Hasbro's latest Mando-themed additions to The Retro Collection, a range of 3 3/4-inch action figures inspired by Kenner's line of toys launched in 1978.

Featuring five points of articulation and 6-inch by 9-inch cardbacks with faux aging, the first wave includes fan-favorite characters from the hit Disney+ series, including The Child, Cara Dune, Greef Karga, Moff Gideon, Kuiil, IG-11, and the titular Mandalorian himself.

Available now, these retro figures can be yours for \$9.99 each.



Boba's Back(pack)!

A handy carry-all for work, school, and every Fett fan

Even the most fearsome bounty hunter in the galaxy needs somewhere to stash their stuff as they stalk down their latest prey. The Boba Fett Top Zip Backpack, coming soon from Bioworld Merchandising and priced at \$98.99, features the green and grey color scheme of Boba's iconic armor, with a mythosaur skull adding authentic detail.



Blurrrg!

Charge into battle with Hasbro's Mission Fleet

Stomp into action with characters and creatures from *The Mandalorian* in the latest additions of Hasbro's *Star Wars* Mission Fleet. New additions to the line include the Defend the Child figure and vehicle set, out now and priced \$19.99, featuring fun figures of IG-11, Cara Dune, a stormtrooper, the Child with hover



pram, and the Mandalorian. This spring look for two more sets coming to your galaxy, priced at \$14.99: Kuil Blurg Battle Charge, which includes the enigmatic ugnought Kuil and his missile-firing blurrgr ride; and the Biker Scout Speeder Bike Speeder Sprint, which includes a biker-scout figure and a speeder bike with a sidecar.



Moff is a Must Have

Mando's fearsome foe goes Premium Format

Moff Gideon's desire to capture the Child in the Disney+ series *The Mandalorian* has been a major problem for Mando and his friends across two seasons of space adventure. His obsession could become yours, if you feel a compelling need to add the Moff Gideon Premium Format Figure from Sideshow Collectibles to your carefully curated collection.

Recreating a gasp-inducing moment from the final episode of Season One, this finely detailed polystone figure of the fiendish Moff features a sculpted body suit and fabric cape, plus the legendary darksaber. Available to pre-order now, priced \$595, shipping is estimated to begin in December 2021.

MANDO MERCH

The latest bounty on which to blow your beskar



Black Series Bucket

Boba Fett Re-Armored

Having made a surprise return to our screens during the second season of *The Mandalorian*, and having reclaimed his father's armor in the process, Boba Fett showed an unexpected creative streak by buffing up his battered bucket with a shiny new coat of paint.

New to Hasbro's Black Series, the Boba Fett (Re-Armored) Premium Electronic Helmet **A** recreates Fett's fancy new look, complete with flip-down rangefinder with flashing LED lights and an illuminated heads-up display.

Available for pre-order now priced \$119.99, the new Fett bucket will be coming to stores in the Spring of 2022. And if that seems like a long wait, remember the last time we saw the legendary bounty hunter, he was destined to spend all *eternity* languishing in the belly of the all-powerful Sarlacc!

The Mandalori-Pin

Show off your Mando spirit

The Armorer's decision to affix the mudhorn icon to Mando's armor was one of the most powerful moments of *The Mandalorian's* first season. FiGPiN brings you the opportunity to wear your own Mando-inspired pins on your clothing or display them in your home. The highly detailed 3-inch tall pins **B** are made from hard enamel and come with a unique ID code, rubber backer stand, a backer card, and a collectible FiGPiN clear protector case. Choose from an array of characters, including the Child in his pram, The Armorer holding her blacksmith tools, IG-11 carrying the Child, and Moff Gideon wielding the legendary Darksaber. Each pin is priced at \$14.99.



Digitally rendered image. Final product may vary.



May the floors be with you

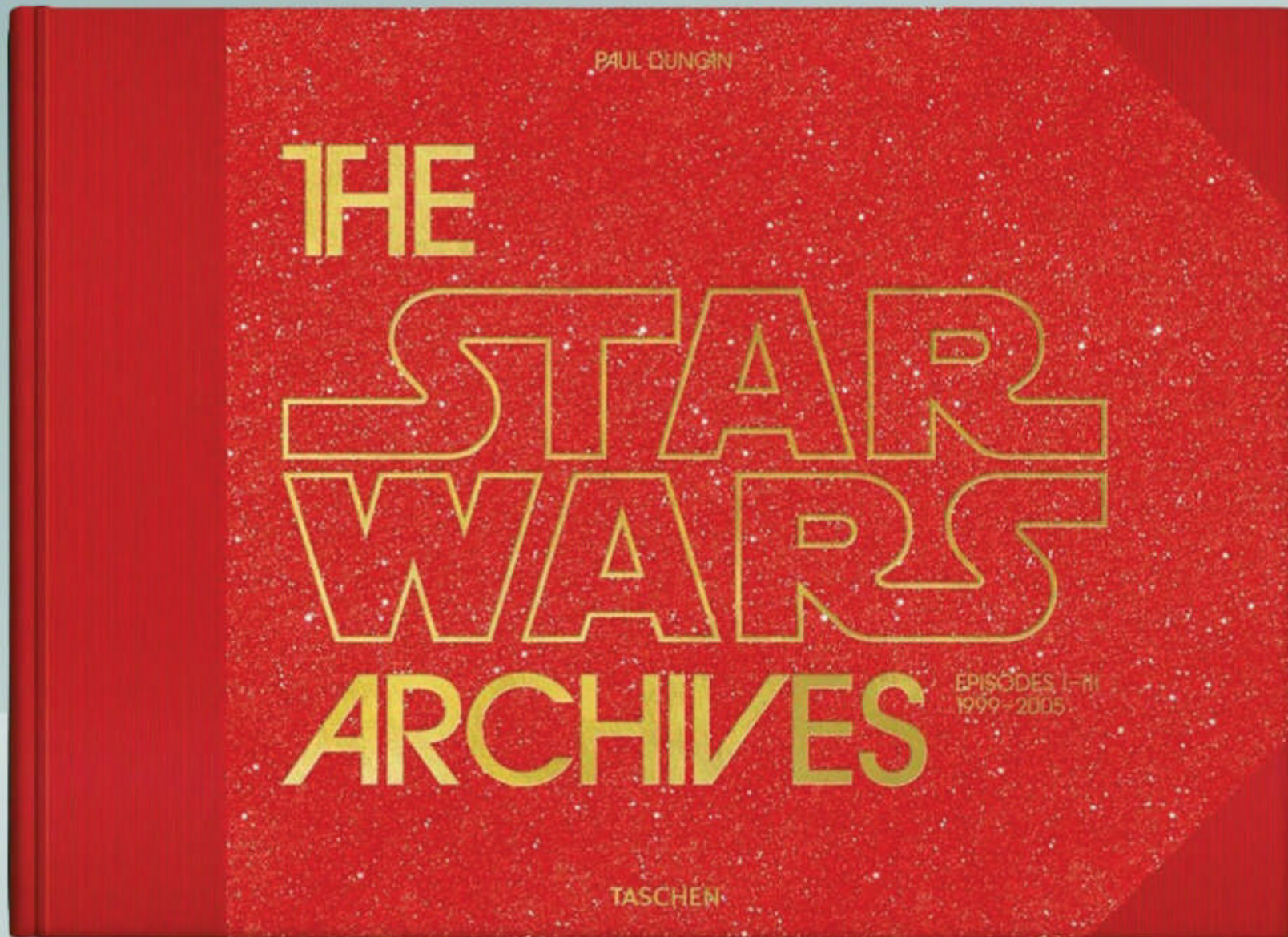
Adorn your doorstep with the Child's friendly face

What better way to welcome guests to your home than by showing off your *Star Wars* fandom? Pyramid America provides a pair of perfect doormats **C** that will let your neighbors know that Mandalorians from far and wide are free to visit your own personal covert.

Measuring 17-inches by 29-inches, both mats bear likenesses of the Child, but offer very different messages. The cheerier of the two options has the Child peering cheekily up at guests, ears raised, and bears the jokey legend, "Welcome. I'm All Ears." More menacingly, and surely gracing the floor of Moff Gideon's personal residence, the second mat simply says "Wanted," and features a more worried looking Child in his hover pram. Available now, each natural coir doormat includes soft PVC skid-resistant backing and is priced at \$19.99.

Book Club

Gaining wisdom from past event in the latest *Star Wars* books.



Take a deep dive into the *Star Wars Archives*

Lost secrets of the prequel trilogy uncovered

If the first volume, *The Star Wars Archives: Episodes IV - VI: 1977-1983*, authored by Paul Duncan proved a heavy burden for your bookshelves, adding this prequel trilogy follow-up to your collection may require some structural reinforcement. The 600-page tome weighs in at an impressive 13.76 pounds (6.24 kilograms), and every ounce has been put to good use in an exhaustive exploration of George Lucas' trio of movies following the rise and fall of Anakin Skywalker in *Star Wars: The Phantom Menace* (1999), *Attack of the Clones* (2002) and *Revenge of the Sith* (2005).

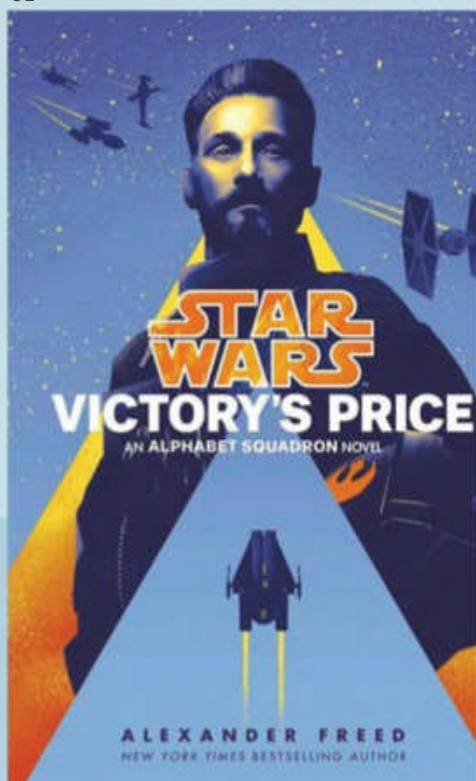
An astonishing array of images make *The Star Wars Archives: Episodes I-III: 1999-2005* a visual feast, with eye-catching concept art, behind-the-scenes photographs, storyboards, and stills from the movies benefitting from the scale and space this large-format book affords them. There are also facsimiles of production notes and script pages that tell their own stories of how the movies were made, but the real detail comes from the exclusive interviews that run throughout. As with the first book, Duncan again spoke with George Lucas at length about his storytelling

process, and the filmmaker talks extensively about his motivations and the storytelling opportunities made available by the pioneering technology developed for the films. Lucas also speaks about his early ideas for a sequel trilogy, which makes for fascinating reading.

Duncan also spoke to many of Lucas' collaborators who worked on the trilogy, painting the most complete picture of how the films were created ever to have seen print.

Published by Taschen, *The Star Wars Archives: Episodes I-III: 1999-2005* is out now.

01



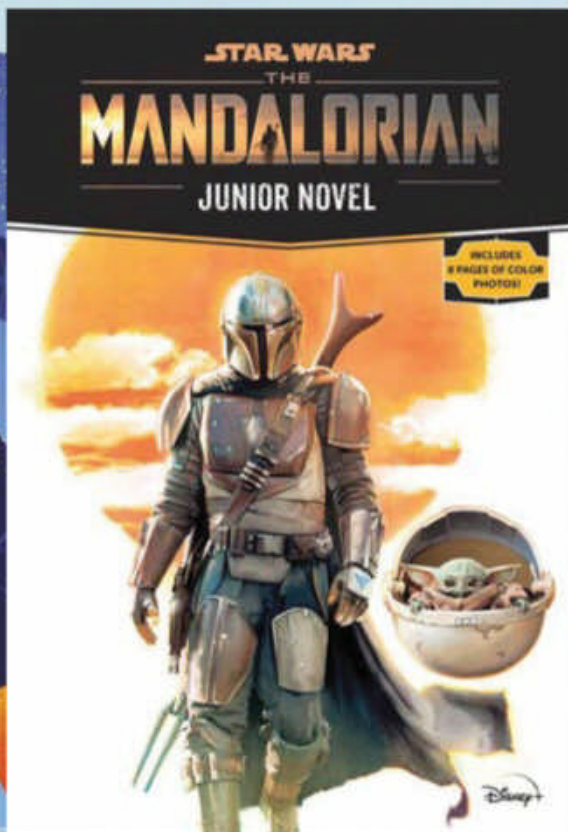
01

Star Wars: Victory's Price

Available March 2 from Del Rey, *Victory's Price* is the hardcover sequel to 2020's *Shadow Fall* and represents the conclusion of Alexander Freed's high-octane *Alphabet Squadron* trilogy.

In the wake of Yrica Quell's shocking decision, Alphabet Squadron seeks answers as the galaxy's war scars threaten to split open once more. While Operation Cinder—the Empire's terrifying protocol of planetary extermination—burns throughout the galaxy, Shadow Wing regains its strength. The starfighter pilots of the New Republic have one last chance to defeat their enemy before it carries out the Emperor's final edict of destruction, but how do you catch a shadow?

02



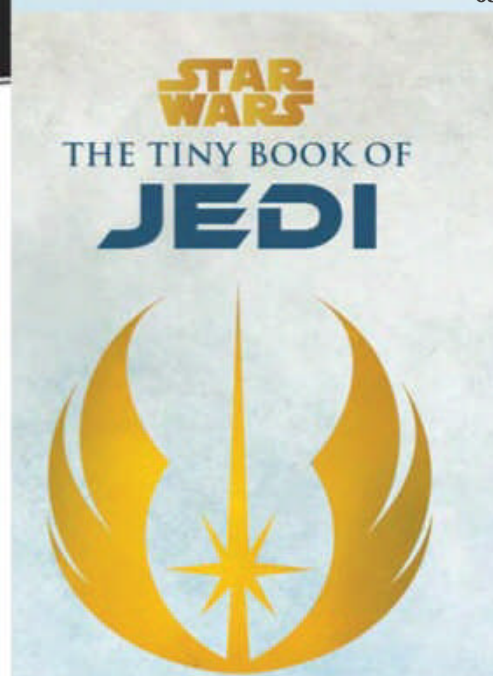
02

Star Wars: The Mandalorian Junior Novel

This is the way! *The Mandalorian* is the smash hit series on Disney+, and this new junior novel from Disney Lucasfilm Press is the perfect way to relive the events of the show's first season.

Follow the Mandalorian as he travels the fringes of the galaxy, hunting bounties for credits until his work brings him into contact with the Force-sensitive being known only as the Child. His decision to protect the Child at all costs puts the Mandalorian at odds with everyone, including the Empire's remnants and the Bounty Hunters Guild! Written by Joe Schreiber and featuring a color photo insert, *The Mandalorian Junior Novel* is in stores now.

03



03

The Tiny Book of Jedi: Wisdom from the Light Side of the Force

Coming March 9 from Insight Editions, this enlightening yet tiny book's small size allows any fan to hold a thousand generations of Jedi history in the palm of their hand.

Written by S.T. Bende, *The Tiny Book of Jedi* compiles generations of Jedi lore from such luminaries as Luke Skywalker, Yoda, Rey, and Ezra Bridger, presenting their lessons alongside dazzling art pieces and a cloth bookmark to mark one's place. *The Tiny Book of Jedi* serves as a companion volume to *The Tiny Book of Sith: Knowledge from the Dark Side of the Force*, available at the same time, for those who prefer dark-side lore from masters ranging from Darth Maul to Kylo Ren.

Comics Roundup

A new epoch of adventures begins in this month's *Star Wars* comics.

Here Come the Nihil!

The Jedi prepare for battle in *Star Wars: The High Republic Adventures* #1

Star Wars: The High Republic Adventures, coming this February from IDW Publishing, is a brand-new ongoing series set centuries years before the events of the *Star Wars* films. In this era, the Republic is at its peak and the Jedi Order has never been stronger. But a terrifying new adversary known as the Nihil wants to bring it all crashing down.

Writing this all-ages title is Daniel José Older, author of the 2018 *New York Times* bestselling novel *Star Wars: Last Shot*, and he's ably supported by artist Harvey Tolibao and colorist Rebecca Nalty in chronicling the adventures of Master Yoda's Padawan trainees and the young heroes in their orbit. The action begins in the aftermath of the devastating Hyperspace Disaster, with flaming debris about to rain down on the planet Trymant IV. Zeen and her friend Krix have only minutes to reach the Elders of the Path and lead them to safety, while the Padawan class serving under Jedi Masters Yoda and Torban Buck steel themselves for a perilous rescue mission.

"I'm so very excited to be able to tell this epic story of Padawans, as the galaxy changes dramatically around them and danger lurks around every corner," Older explained to *StarWars.com*. "Working on *The High Republic* has been a dream come true, and getting to watch this world come to life through the brilliant art of Harvey Tolibao is one of the highlights of my career. I can't wait for the fans to see what we're cooking up."



IDW editor Elizabeth Brei added, "It's a thrill for us to get to participate in the storytelling of this bold new era of *Star Wars* lore. Daniel, Harvey, and Rebecca are building an incredible chapter of the story that is truly essential reading."

Star Wars: The High Republic Adventures #1 will be available in stores on February 3, and collectors should keep their eyes open for several unique retail cover variants, including one by Tolibao himself and another by artist Yael Nathan.

Bounty Hunters #9

As the “Terminus Gauntlet” arc continues, cyborg bounty hunter Valance is on the run. Having already survived encounters with notorious hunters including Zuckuss and 4-LOM, Valance finds that he’s now the most wanted person in the galaxy!

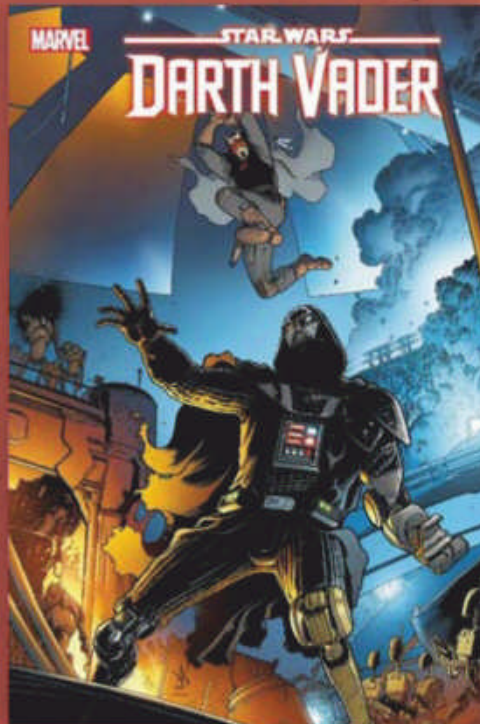
In the latest installment from writer Ethan Sacks and artist Paolo Villanelli, Valance is trapped aboard a rebel transport besieged by pirates. Only a desperate gambit will ensure his survival, but his old rival Dengar is back—along with another figure guaranteed to change the galactic underworld forever! *Bounty Hunters* #9 features a cover by Mattia De Iulio. In stores January 27.



Darth Vader #9

As punishment for his previous weaknesses, Emperor Palpatine has banished his apprentice, Darth Vader, to the lava world of Mustafar. Seething, Vader has since scoured the planet to unlock the secrets of his cruel master, and only the Sith assassin, Ochi of Bestoon—as mentioned in *Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker* (2019)—can aid him in his quest.

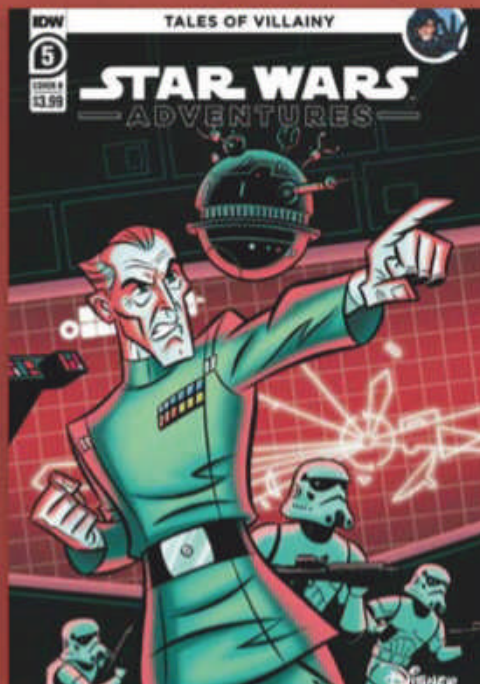
But could these events merely be cogs in the Emperor’s machinations, and what might happen when Vader and Ochi discover the truth? *Darth Vader* #9, by writer Greg Pak and artist Raffaele Ienco, is available now, with a cover by artist Aaron Kuder.



Star Wars Adventures #5

In another exciting tale set during the prequel trilogy, outlaws ruin a romantic evening between Padmé Amidala and Anakin Skywalker, kicking off the fifth issue of *Star Wars Adventures* from IDW.

After Anakin is Jedi-napped at the hands of a bunch of greedy bandits with designs on stealing a holocron from the Jedi Temple, Padmé must marshal all of her cunning to infiltrate their criminal hideout and rescue her love. Brought to you by writers Katie Cook and Casey Gilly, with artists Cara McGee and Ethen Beavers, *Star Wars Adventures* #5 is in stores now.



Incoming

Don't Miss These
Upcoming Releases



FEBRUARY

Star Wars Adventures #6

IDW Comics

Writers: Katie Cook and Shaun Manning

Artists: Cara McGee and Fico Ossio

Cover Artist: Francesco Francavilla

Star Wars #11

Marvel Comics

Writer: Charles Soule

Artist: Jan Bazaldua

Cover Artist: Carlo Pagulayan

Darth Vader #10

Marvel Comics

Writer: Greg Pak

Artist: Raffaele Ienco

Cover Artist: Aaron Kuder

The High Republic #2

Marvel Comics

Writer: Cavan Scott

Artist: Ario Anindito

Cover Artist: Phil Noto

Star Wars Legends

Epic Collection Volume #5

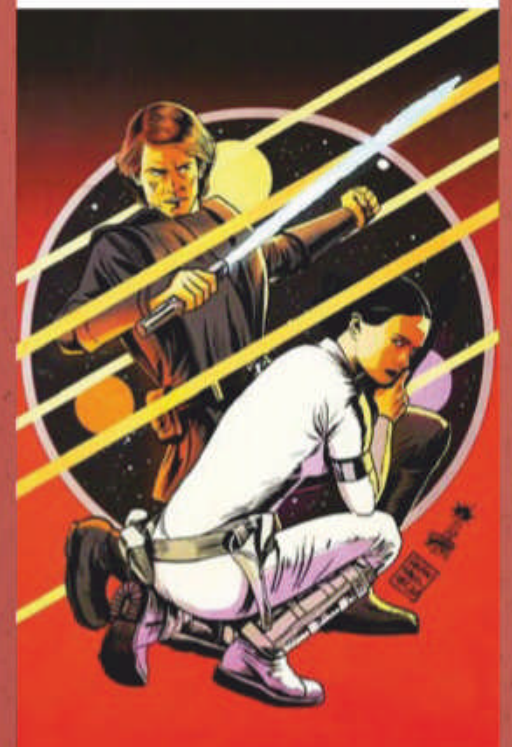
The New Republic

Marvel Comics

Writers: Tom Veitch and others

Artists: Cam Kennedy and others

Cover Artist: Dave Dorman





Luminous Lore

Shining a light on *Star Wars: The High Republic*.

Darkest Fears

A young Jedi is taken out of his comfort zone in *Into the Dark*.

Star Wars: The High Republic is Lucasfilm's new multimedia initiative, promising a wealth of books and comics dedicated to exploring an untold *Star Wars* era, 200 years prior to the events of the films. Providing an ideal entry point to this saga for young adult readers is *Into the Dark*, the new novel by Claudia Gray, one of the key architects behind the ambitious project.

The novel tells the tale of Reath Silas, a Jedi Padawan sent on a new mission intended to uproot him from the cosy, cosmopolitan urbanity of Coruscant. Young Reath is quite fond of the sterile environs of the Jedi Archives, and isn't too happy about being transplanted into the savage wilds of the galactic frontier, but when his ship is knocked out of hyperspace during a galaxy-wide disaster, he



suddenly finds himself at the heart of the unfolding crisis and seeking refuge aboard a seemingly abandoned space station. It isn't long, however, before strange things start happening. Reath and his companions must unravel a dark mystery, even if the revelation of the truth results in tragedy!

Published by Disney Lucasfilm Press, *Star Wars: The High Republic: Into the Dark* is in stores now.



JANUARY

Light of the Jedi

Writer: Charles Soule

Publisher: Del Rey

Release Date: January 5, 2021

A Test of Courage

Writer: Justina Ireland

Publisher: Disney Lucasfilm Press

Release Date: January 5, 2021

The Great Jedi Rescue

Writer: Cavan Scott

Artist: Petur Antonsson

Publisher: Disney Lucasfilm Press

Release Date: January 5, 2021

FEBRUARY

Into the Dark

Writer: Claudia Gray

Publisher: Disney Lucasfilm Press

Release Date: February 2, 2021

JUNE

The Rising Storm

Writer: Cavan Scott

Publisher: Del Rey

Release Date: June 29, 2021

Race to Crashpoint Tower

Writer: Cavan Scott

Publisher: Disney Lucasfilm Press

Release Date: June 29, 2021



Author Claudia Gray on the reluctant hero of her *The High Republic* debut

"Reath has had a somewhat unusual experience as a Padawan," *Into the Dark* author Claudia Gray reveals to *Star Wars Insider*. "His master, Jora Malli, is a member of the Jedi Council, and the two of them have traveled away from Coruscant fairly rarely. So, while most Padawans have seen a lot of the galaxy, Reath's experience is a little more limited. And he likes it that way! He's a bookworm, a homebody,

something of an introvert. Of course, his master knows it's time to shake Reath's expectations up a bit.

"For a Jedi, he's not especially strong in the Force," adds Gray. "Reath's intellectual capacities determine his success more than his raw abilities. He knows how to dig deep and come at a problem from different directions. When the going gets tough, you might rather have someone like Reath on your side. It was a welcome change of pace to write a Jedi Knight who wants very different things and looks on his lightsaber as a weapon of last resort."

ALL-NEW PROOF TRIBUTE HONORS A HERO OF GALACTIC STATURE

PROOF QUALITY AND RICHLY PLATED IN 99.9% SILVER



Shown larger than actual size
of 1 1/2 inches diameter.

OFFICIAL ISSUE:

Officially licensed by Lucasfilm Ltd., this tribute is only available from The Bradford Exchange Mint.

ALL-NEW DESIGN:

This 99.9% silver-plated Proof was struck to celebrate Luke Skywalker and the inspiration he's been to generations of fans. Due to its very limited availability, only the earliest applicants will be able to secure this commemorative Proof

CONDITION:

Intended as a collectors' item, this 99.9% silver-plated tribute is offered in coveted Proof condition and availability is very limited.

SECURED AND PROTECTED:

Your Proof arrives in a crystal-clear capsule for heirloom protection.

This fine collectible is not legal tender and bears no monetary face value. Design subject to change

A BRILLIANT TRIBUTE TO A GALACTIC HERO.

From naive Tatooine™ farm boy to decorated hero to Jedi™ knight, Luke Skywalker's™ transformation from ordinary to extraordinary captivated audiences worldwide. Now The Bradford Exchange Mint is proud to present an original tribute: *The Star Wars Luke Skywalker Proof*.

Richly plated in 99.9% silver for enduring beauty, the front of this Proof-quality commemorative stars heroic Luke Skywalker, with his father's blue lightsaber. His uncle's farm and Tatooine's two moons appear in the background. The back showcases the iconic Star Wars logo sculpted in bas-relief and the inscription "A long time ago in a galaxy far, far away...." in Aurebesh lettering. Secured in a crystal-clear capsule, it will be treasured for years to come.

LIMITED AVAILABILITY ORDER NOW.

Order now at the \$49.95* issue price, payable in two installments of \$24.98 each, plus a total of \$4.95 shipping and service. You need send no money now, and you will be billed with shipment. Your purchase is backed by our unconditional, 365-day guarantee and you may cancel at any time simply by notifying us. Don't miss the *Star Wars Luke Skywalker Proof* as well as future issues in the *Star Wars Proof Collection* as they become available. Mail the coupon now!

Officially licensed by Lucasfilm Ltd.



ORDER TODAY AT BRADFORDEXCHANGE.COM/SKYWALKER



The Bradford Exchange Mint is not affiliated with the U.S. Government or U.S. Mint.

© & ™ Lucasfilm Ltd. ©2020 BGE 17-02506-001-BD

PRIORITY RESERVATION CERTIFICATE

SEND NO MONEY NOW

The Bradford Exchange Mint

9307 Milwaukee Avenue • Niles, IL 60714-9995

YES. Please reserve *The Star Wars Luke Skywalker Proof* for me as described in this announcement. I need send no money now. I will be billed with shipment.

*Plus a total of \$4.95 shipping and service per Proof. All sales are subject to product availability and order acceptance. By accepting this reservation, you will be enrolled in the *Star Wars Proof Collection*, with the opportunity, never the obligation, to collect future issues, sixteen in all. Issues will arrive about once a month.

Mrs. Mr. Ms.

Name (Please Print Clearly)

Address

City

State

Zip

Email (optional)

911011-E12201



200 REASONS WHY WE LOVE *STAR WARS*

Star Wars appeals to people from many different places and all walks of life. Our love for the saga unites us, binding this galaxy of fans together. On the occasion of *Star Wars Insider's* 200th issue, we present 200 reasons why we love it so much, with the help of *Star Wars* luminaries and celebrity devotees.

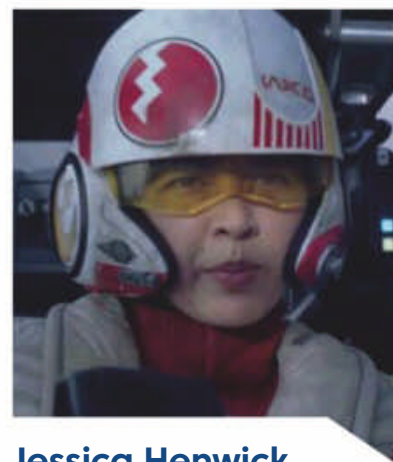
WORDS: CHRISTOPHER COOPER

WITH THANKS TO JAY STOBIE, BRETT RECTOR,
KRISTIN BAVER, MARK NEWBOLD, AND ALL WHO GAVE
THEIR TIME TO CONTRIBUTE TO THIS FEATURE.

33

YEARS IN
THE MAKING

Ten years after *Star Wars: A New Hope* (1977) made its theatrical debut in the U.S., the Official Lucasfilm Fanclub published the first issue of its club newsletter. Twenty-three issues later the magazine morphed into *Star Wars Insider*, the title under which it has been published since 1994. Along the way, dozens of contributors have shared their love for *Star Wars* with you, our readers. *Insider* wouldn't exist without your enthusiasm and continued support. Thank you.

**Jessica Henwick**

Jessika Pava in *Star Wars: The Force Awakens* (1999)

"A world without *Star Wars* would be a wildly different place. No film series has had a bigger cultural impact. I love how it transcends countries, cultures, ages even!"

Rob Bredow

Chief Creative Officer, Industrial Light & Magic

"Dennis Muren photographing the AT-AT's in *Star Wars: The Empire Strikes Back* (1980) inspired me to follow a career in the visual effects industry. Getting to work at ILM is a dream come true."

Ingvild Deila

Princess Leia in *Rogue One: A Star Wars Story* (2016)

"I've met *Star Wars* fans from around the world, and it's been encouraging to see people from different backgrounds come together and be supportive of each other in their expressions of fandom. It is moving when I meet fans who devote their love for the galaxy far, far away to raising funds for worthy charities in this galaxy."

Amin Elhassan

ESPN Analyst and Commentator

"When I was 8 years old, my family and I moved back to our native homeland of Sudan. It was quite the culture shock, but I was able to survive with a caseload of movies videotaped off the TV. By far and away the most viewed was *A New Hope*."

"Watching a young Luke Skywalker grow up in an environment not that dissimilar to my own was inspirational. I dreamed of outgrowing my surroundings and changing the course of history."

John Jackson Miller

Author, *Star Wars: Kenobi*

"The movie house where I first saw *A New Hope* was the very same one where Elvis Presley had seen it weeks before, the Whitehaven Theater in Memphis, Tennessee. The King of Rock and Roll used it as a private screening room. *Star Wars* would have been one of the last movies he saw; I don't know if he liked it, but hey, who doesn't like *Star Wars*?"

Jerome Blake

Mas Amedda in *Star Wars: The Phantom Menace* (1999)

"Where do I begin, to tell the story of how great a love can be? Back in the day, I went on a date with a girl who was way out of my league to see the movie *Love Story* (1970); we stayed to watch it three times. The next time I stayed to watch a movie three times was in 1977, and that movie was *A New Hope*. I was hooked. *Star Wars* is the longest love story of my life."

**Dominic Monaghan**

Beaumont Kin in *Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker* (2019)

"*Star Wars* is the reason I became an actor. Every experience I've had as an actor has been influenced by the spark that was lit when watching the original trilogy as a kid, and deciding acting is what I wanted to do. It's been one of the driving narratives behind my entire life."

David DastmalchianPiter De Vries in *Dune* (2021)

"I have always loved the way *Star Wars*' ragtag group of accidental friends learn to love and lift one another up in the face of seemingly invincible evil. It is truly about holding onto hope, regardless of the odds."

Chris WeitzScreenwriter,
Rogue One: A Star Wars Story (2016)

“ Luke Skywalker was always my favorite. Everybody loves Han, but as an idealistic seven-year-old, Luke was everything I wanted to be. And the thing is, I still feel the same way.”

14

**THE ART OF
STAR WARS**

The iconic look of *Star Wars* originated in awe-inspiring concept art by Ralph McQuarrie. His work, and that of other talented artists over the decades, has been showcased in the lavish *Art of Star Wars* books, now numbering 14 titles.

**Dave Freeman**Senior Concept Artist,
Industrial Light & Magic

"I spent my childhood drawing spaceships, aliens and planets from *Star Wars*. Now, forty years later, I'm still doing the same as a concept artist. That is the power of *Star Wars*."

Michael RosenbaumLex Luthor in
Smallville (2001-2011)

"*Star Wars* has so much detail, you can really tell how much love was put into the movies. My friends and I constantly text each other with *Star Wars* news and trivia. It keeps us young."

**Julie Kogura**Associate Post
Production Manager,
Lucasfilm Animation

"I love how *Star Wars* brings generations together. My dad and I bonded over *Star Wars* long before I got this job!"

Greg Grunberg

Temmin "Snap" Wexley

"*Star Wars* has always meant family to me, especially now that I've been lucky enough to join the *Star Wars* family. Playing Snap Wexley was a bucket-list item that I'll never be able to top, and working on those amazing films with my dearest and oldest friend, J.J. Abrams, made it even more special."

**Garrick Hagon**Biggs Darklighter in
Star Wars: A New Hope (1977)

"*Star Wars* has meant the world to me. Literally. Wherever I've worked, throughout Europe, in China, Africa, wherever, I mention that I was in the original film and eyes light up. I guess they're amazed you're still alive!"

**Taran Killam**Actor and stormtrooper
cameo in *Star Wars Resistance*
(2018-2020)

"*Star Wars* taught me that appearances aren't always what they seem. A green toad man can be the wisest of us all. A mining magnate will stab you in the back then save your life. Trying means nothing."

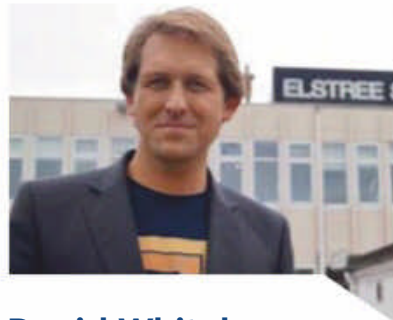
Neal ScanlanCreature and special make-up effects
creative supervisor

“ When Luke Skywalker flies his X-wing into the Death Star trench was the first time I'd felt like the theater itself had moved. I'd never experienced anything like it, and that was when *Star Wars* became more than visual to me, it was physical.”

Ian McDiarmid

Emperor Palpatine/
Darth Sidious

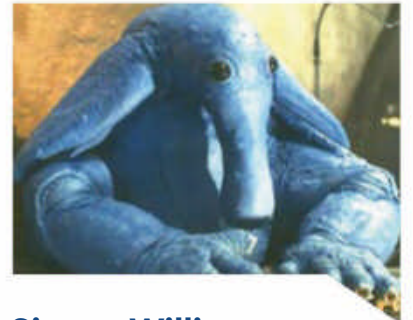
"When I first saw what I looked like in the apparatus from *The Rise of Skywalker*, I thought 'Ahh, I've finally achieved my apotheosis as a Pez dispenser.' That was weirdly satisfying."



David Whiteley

Filmmaker,
The Galaxy Britain Built (2017)

"*Star Wars* has been my favorite thing my entire life. The excitement and wonder are as real today as when I was 5 years old. When I made the documentary, *The Galaxy Britain Built*, I got to meet so many of my filmmaking heroes who brought that galaxy to life. What an honor!"



Simon Williamson

Max Rebo in *Star Wars: Return of the Jedi* (1983)

"Tinkling the prop ivories as an elephantine keyboard-player was a terrific job. Forward some decades to a panel talk on a podium. Happy faces, hands shaken, moments shared. The life of a performer from the original trilogy, still close to people's hearts. What a fine thing this *Star Wars* galaxy is."

Mary Elizabeth McGlynn

Freya Fenris in *Star Wars Resistance* (2018-2020)

“For me, *Star Wars* has always been about one thing—hope. Faced with seemingly insurmountable odds, there is always hope. We can never give up.”

Sarah Spain

Radio host and
TV personality

"Whether you're a *Star Wars* diehard or a casual fan, you know the impact of Princess Leia. While most movie princesses would be waiting around to be saved, Leia was adjusting strategies for taking out stormtroopers. In a galaxy full of fantastical creatures, somehow the galaxy's petite but persistent heroine steals the show."

James Khan

Author, *Star Wars: Return of the Jedi* novelization

"I saw *Star Wars* on the opening night, May 1977. The theater was almost full, so I had to take a seat in the second row, my head tipped back to look up at the screen. And then one of the peak movie experiences of my life. A spaceship enters the frame, trailed by another, flying directly above me as I stare up in awe. And it just keeps coming, and coming, there's no end to it, it's massive, there's never been a spaceship this big... And I'm a fan for life."



27

A SAGA IN NUMBERS

Across twelve films (including *The Clone Wars* movie) and fifteen seasons of television adventures, it would take almost seven days (including comfort breaks) to enjoy every moment of onscreen *Star Wars**.

12
Blockbuster
Theatrical
Movies
Total Minutes
of *Star Wars*:
Approx. 1,606

7
Seasons of
Star Wars: The Clone Wars
(2008-14, 2020)
Total Minutes
of *Star Wars*:
Approx. 3,990

4
Seasons of
Star Wars Rebels
(2014-2018)
Total Minutes
of *Star Wars*:
Approx. 2,250

2
Seasons of
Star Wars Resistance
(2018-2019)
Total Minutes
of *Star Wars*:
Approx. 630

2
Seasons of
Star Wars: The Mandalorian
(2019-present)
Total Minutes
of *Star Wars*:
Approx. 480

*and counting (not including Ewok movies, videogames, LEGO adaptations, holiday specials, or documentaries)!



William Shatner

Captain Kirk
in *Star Trek*

“I like everybody in *Star Wars*, including Mark Hamill. And believe me, that’s a generosity of spirit that I didn’t know I had. The *Star Wars* saga tells tales right out of Mount Olympus. Grecian stories of Gods and hostile giants living far, far away.”

Kristin Baver

Host of *This Week! in Star Wars* and
The Star Wars Show Book Club
Associate Editor, *StarWars.com*, Lucasfilm

“There’s something in *Star Wars* for everyone—a character that resonates, or a moment that helps you understand your own life a little bit better. And it helps us connect to each other. I’ve lost count of the number of times I’ve met someone wearing a *Star Wars* T-shirt and it’s started a conversation or a friendship.”



Dave Chapman

BB-8 puppeteer

“Watching *Star Wars* for the first time took me away from a wintry, grey U.K. and into an incredible and exciting world. I became obsessed with finding out how it was all done. I remember lying on my bedroom floor as a kid, dreaming of working on a *Star Wars* movie, just for one day. I suppose the ‘dreams can come true’ thing is what *Star Wars* means most to me.”

Brian Herring

BB-8 puppeteer

“It’s a generational thing, and I love that. Whether you’re an excited kid watching the Star Destroyer pass over your head for the first time, or a grandparent remembering taking *that* child’s parent to see it way back when, the thunderous fanfare of the opening crawl still delivers a tingle. I’ve never lost sight of how these stories make me feel.”



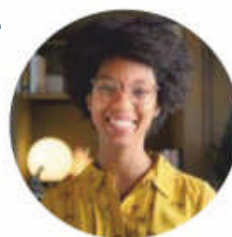
John Morton

Dak Ralter in *Star Wars: The Empire Strikes Back* (1980)

“Playing Dak has given me the privilege to serve as a *Star Wars* ambassador, to go out amongst the fans to reinforce the positive vision of the films, to entertain and encourage fans to have hope and faith in themselves, and pursue their dreams.”

Bridgette Powell

Software Engineer,
Industrial Light & Magic



“I love how the *Star Wars* galaxy contains so many technological inventions! It’s inspiring to see technology used by everyone.”



Jon Kasdan

Co-writer, *Solo: A Star Wars Story* (2018)

“I love *Star Wars*’ scale, the limitlessness of that galaxy far, far away that seems to always have room for more worlds, more characters and more stories. I’d already experienced the thrill of imagining something and then realizing it as a filmmaker, but to do so with *Star Wars*, on that largest of scales, reminds you of the awesome power of imagination.”

1

THE ONE AND ONLY CHILD

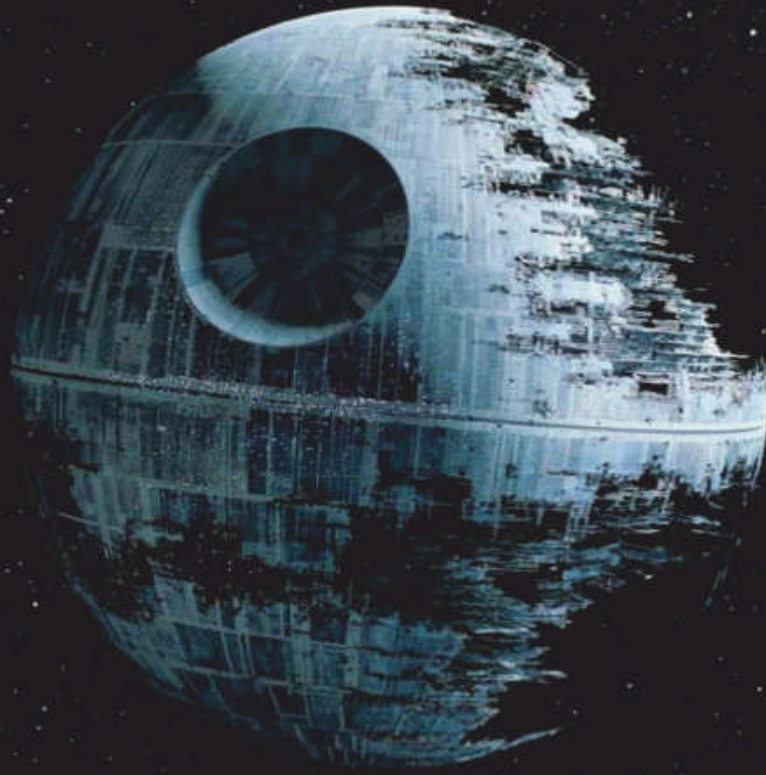
Small, green, and always hungry, he’s the breakout star of *The Mandalorian*!



55

A GALAXY IN NUMBERS

The *Insider* navicomputer parses the fastest route to 55 reasons, in just 10 jumps!*

**10 Years**

Length of time after *The Phantom Menace* before Anakin Skywalker saw Padmé Amidala again.

09 Trench Runners

The number of rebel starfighters that braved the Death Star trench.

08 Droid Denominations

BB-8, R5-D4, QT-KT, BT-1, L3-37, C1-10P, K-2SO, IG-88... the list goes on!

07 Dark-Side Devotees

Kylo Ren and his band of Force-sensitive warriors, the Knights of Ren.

06 Riotous Rebels

The crew of the *Ghost*, codenamed the Spectres.

05 Aces High

The defenders of the *Colossus* refueling station.

04 Deadly Darths

Dark Lords Sidious, Maul, Tyranus, and Vader!

03 Planet-zapping Superweapons

The bigger they come, the harder they fall.

02 Plucky Droids

C-3PO and R2-D2 witnessed it all, but only one remembers. (They even had their own animated TV series!)

01 Chosen One

The prophesied person who would bring balance to the Force.

*Add them up as follows: 10+9+8+7+6+5+4+3+2+1=55!

Joonas Suotamo
Chewbacca

“*Star Wars* is a special place for me. It’s a refuge where my mind can escape. The relatable characters and thrilling adventures make the galaxy come alive and feel so real. In this fantastical setting, I love that we can recognize elements of our own world in the midst of this ancient, spacefaring society.”

Mary Carr

Asset Team Office
Administrator, Lucasfilm

“My favorite thing about *Star Wars* is the way it can turn total strangers into friends. No matter what we are facing in this world, *Star Wars* continues to bring people together.”

John Walsh

Filmmaker and Author

“For all its technological wizardry, the original *Star Wars* trilogy relied on stop-motion animation—a century-old special effects technique—to bring the story alive. From the chess set onboard the *Millennium Falcon* to the scout walkers on Endor, the use of stop-motion makes those scenes timeless.”

Tim Rose
Admiral Ackbar

“After the costume fitting for *The Force Awakens*, it was deemed that my middle-aged pot belly was spoiling the lines of the Ackbar costume, so I had to wear a male girdle during filming. When I saw the new Hasbro action figure for the first time, I burst out laughing. I had most definitely forgotten to put my girdle on the day they 3D-scanned me for the toy mold!”



Obi-Wan
Anakin
Padmé



Han
Leia
Luke



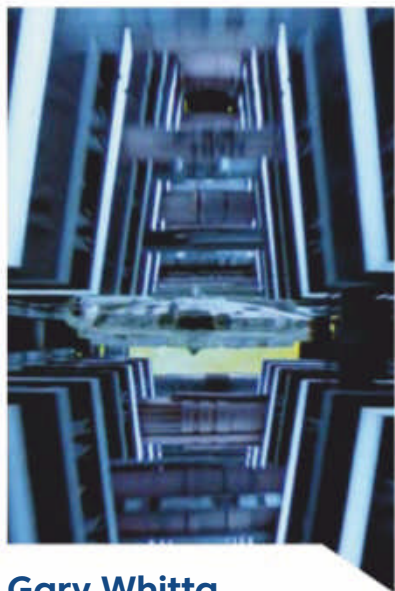
Rey
Finn
Poe



9

HEROES' JOURNEYS

Star Wars has given us a wealth of heroic characters to root for, in epic tales that can trace their roots to folklore, myths, and legends from our own galaxy.



Gary Whitta

Writer, *Rogue One: A Star Wars Story* (2016)

"I remember vividly the moment *Star Wars* set me on the path to my filmmaking career, when Lando says, 'Here goes nothing!' and pilots the *Millennium Falcon* inside the Death Star in *Star Wars: Return of the Jedi* (1983). I was 11 years old, and it absolutely blew me away. That whole third act filled me with such wonder and joy, I realized that I wanted to do something with my life that would allow me to convey that same magical feeling to others."

Jean-Paul Beaulieu

Senior Lighting
Technical Director,
Industrial Light & Magic

"For me, *Star Wars* has been about living up to your potential; doing what is right; and even when you fail, never giving up. I try to live my life like this, and *Star Wars* is the reason I do."

P.J. Byrne

Adam Bourke in *The Boys* (2020)

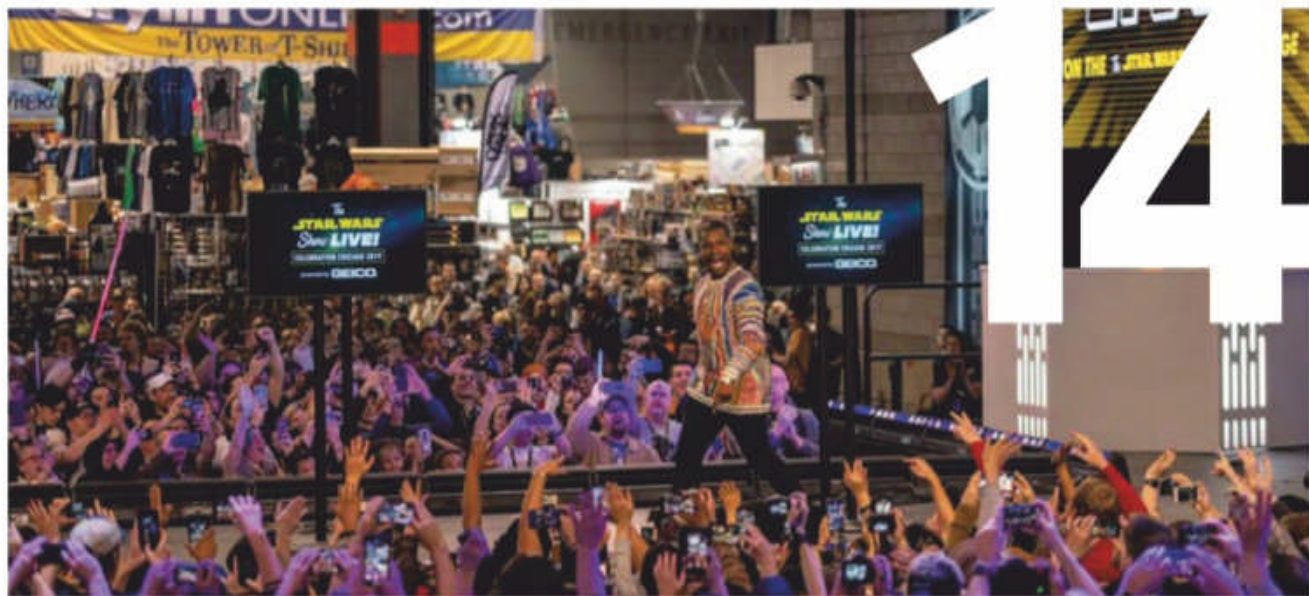
"*Star Wars* was the first big movie event of my life and nothing has quite captured that communal grandness since. There's nothing better than watching an epic film and feeling the energy of a packed movie theater."



Ahmed Best

Jar Jar Binks

"*Star Wars* showed me at a very young age that there is no limit to what creativity and imagination can bring. George Lucas had this radical idea and had the faith in himself to bring it to fruition. I take that lesson with me every day, and it inspires me to keep playing, creating, and achieving."



STAR WARS CELEBRATION

From Denver in 1999 to Chicago in 2019, taking in Japan, Germany and the U.K. along the way, Celebration is the most joyful gathering of *Star Wars* fans in the galaxy. See you in Anaheim in 2022!

Tony Sherg

Designer,
StarWars.com,
Lucasfilm

“ I love the strong sense of design that supports *Star Wars*. The clear visual language of the films clearly communicate who the characters are, how the gadgets work, and what kind of environments our heroes are facing, leaving more time for the audience to make a connection with the saga’s characters and themes. ”



Mickey Capoferri

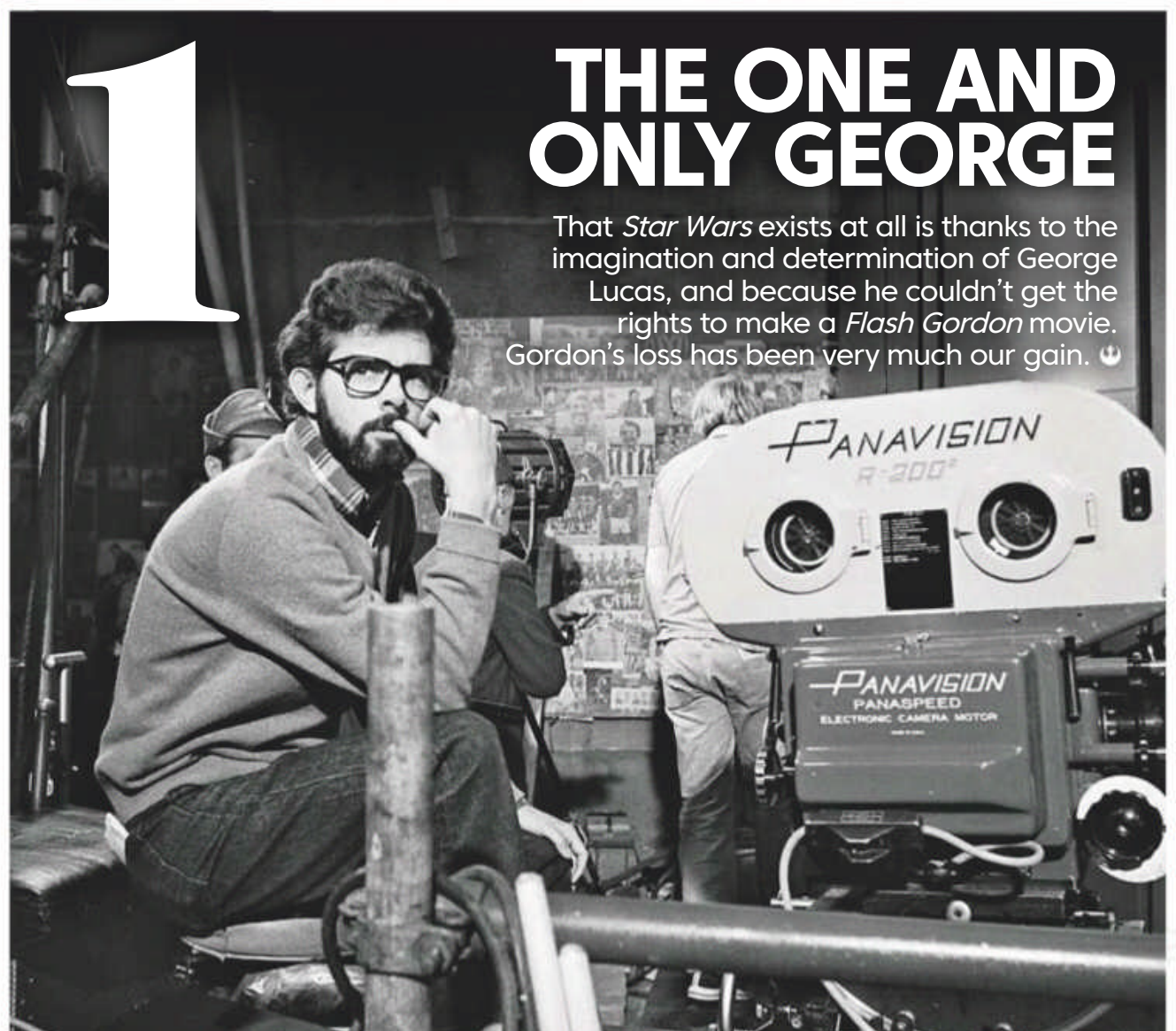
Senior Director of
Online Content and
Programming, Lucasfilm

“*Star Wars* represents the idea that anything is possible. As a kid it opened my imagination like nothing else. It inspired me to dream beyond my everyday life with endless adventures that I could lose myself in. It inspired me to want to create my own stories, and it gave me the confidence to try. Making *Star Wars* content is literally my dream come true.”

Steve Sansweet

Collector of *Star Wars*
ephemera and artifacts

“When I walk through the aisles of toys and other merchandise at Rancho Obi-Wan, it triggers wonderful memories of the *Star Wars* movies, television series, books, and comics that have filled more than four decades of my life and led me in totally unexpected directions. And it is those memories, and the ability to share them with fellow *Star Wars* fans, that keeps my passion for collecting *Star Wars* burning bright.”



1 THE ONE AND ONLY GEORGE

That *Star Wars* exists at all is thanks to the imagination and determination of George Lucas, and because he couldn’t get the rights to make a *Flash Gordon* movie. Gordon’s loss has been very much our gain. 🙌

Ian McDiarmid

Return Of The Sith

With his trademark cackle, the imminent return of Emperor Palpatine was heralded in the trailer for *Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker* (2019). For actor Ian McDiarmid, it was a welcome opportunity to contribute to the completion of a movie saga that has entertained generations.

WORDS: MARK NEWBOLD



an McDiarmid first played the sinister Emperor Palpatine in *Star Wars: Return of the Jedi* (1983),

returning to play a younger version of the character in the prequel trilogy that showed how the seemingly affable senator conquered the *Star Wars* galaxy through stealth and cunning. Having been killed off by Darth Vader at the climax of the original trilogy, as far as McDiarmid was concerned Palpatine's fate was sealed. Or was it?

Star Wars Insider: Were you surprised when the opportunity arose to pull on Palpatine's cloak once again for *The Rise of Skywalker*?

Ian McDiarmid: I was, because I'd assumed he'd been forever consigned to the galactic hell where he belonged. It really didn't look as if he was going to survive after Darth Vader shoved him down that shaft, so I was very surprised to get an email from J.J. Abrams' office asking for my phone number. When I eventually spoke to J.J., he said, "We're thinking of bringing Palpatine back. What do you think

about it?" Well, my first thought was, "Hasn't he been destroyed?", and J.J. explained that he's so clever, bits of him aren't the same as before, but the brain is still intact. So, I said yes, it sounded exciting, and indeed it turned out to be.

Once I'd read the script, and J.J. and I had talked about it, it all seemed highly feasible to me. As you see in the film, Palpatine was in a terrible physical mess, really knocked about and hanging up there in that strange contraption, but the brain was ticking over. In the original script he was much more badly mauled than you saw in the movie, which is probably just as well. One line I had that didn't make the final cut was when Kylo first encounters Palpatine in that first scene and says, "You're a clone!" My line was, "More than a clone, less than a man," which to me seemed to sum him up extremely well.

What appealed to you most about reprising the character?

The thing I liked was that he was so determined he wouldn't be defeated, that he would live on in some form, even if it wasn't going to be in his own body. That was a very interesting idea. ▶





“I’d assumed
he’d been forever
consigned to the
galactic hell where
he belonged.”

▶ You'd imagine that someone with such a brilliant mind as Palpatine would think about the afterlife and not dying, and of course he implied what he'd learned from his predecessor in *Star Wars: Revenge of the Sith* (2005), so I thought he'd probably have something along those lines tucked away somewhere.

More than that, I know J.J. felt honored to have the job of tying up these nine movies, and in a sense that honor was channeled through my character. When you think about it, Palpatine had been responsible, either directly or indirectly, for every evil act throughout these films, so it was a dubious honor to play him again.

Along with the revelation that Palpatine survived, we also discovered he was Rey's grandfather. When was that plot twist first revealed to you?

That came out of the blue. I met with J.J., Kathleen Kennedy, and the casting director Nina Gold shortly after I'd agreed to do the film, and as I had a cup of tea J.J. went through the film and told me the plot as it was at that point, and he didn't spare any detail, he performed it. It was exhilarating to

01



listen to. I felt like I'd seen the whole movie by the time he'd finished. It was an extraordinary notion to find out that I was Rey's grandfather, and sort of wonderful too. The films are full of fathers and sons, and now full of grandfathers and granddaughters too, and it was a nice parallel to Kylo Ren's problems. We see just how closely Rey and Kylo are bound. I thought it was a brilliant stroke.

It was a very exciting day at Pinewood when we shot the scene where I tell Kylo that I'm Rey's grandfather, because as you may know, a lot of people involved in the process of making a film don't

01 The Emperor's makeup chair for *Return of the Jedi* (left) and *The Rise of Skywalker* (right).

02 J.J. Abrams (center) directs McDiarmid, Adam Driver, and Daisy Ridley.



necessarily see a script. So, when we did the first rehearsal on set there was an audible gasp throughout the studio. I thought, "Well, if there's a gasp here and we can keep it a secret, there'll be a very big gasp indeed when the film is released!"

Much like the three trilogies, Palpatine's story played out in an unorthodox order, skipping from the middle to the beginning, then to the end. Has that been a challenge as an actor?

Performers in long-running television series only ever know how their character is going to develop from episode to episode, and that's not a bad thing. They suddenly find that there is a new aspect of their character that they can call on to play that they hadn't thought of before, and that was certainly true for me with Palpatine.

I didn't know that he was a young senator when I played the Emperor in *Return of the Jedi* (1983), and George never actually told me when we had our first meeting about the prequels. He said there were two people, the senator who was working his way up who would end up as the Emperor, and this other character. It was only when I got the call sheet for the first day of filming that I saw my number opposite a character called Darth Sidious, and I thought it was a mistake. Then I thought no, no, they don't make mistakes like this. It was only then that I knew I was two people in one. That was fascinating in itself.

02



BLACK IS THE NEW BLACK

A veteran of Shakespearean theatre, Ian McDiarmid is more than used to performing in opulent theatrical costumes, but his wardrobe as the Emperor in *Return of the Jedi* wasn't quite what he'd expected.

"I remember when I first got the part, I imagined a whole series of magnificent costumes, like a Chinese Emperor," the star of stage and screen ruefully recalls. What he got was layers of black robe hidden beneath an equally black cloak. The prequels, however, were another story.

"I did get those kinds of costumes as Palpatine was moving from senator to chancellor to emperor," adds McDiarmid. "Some wonderful costumes, particularly those for *Star Wars: Attack of the Clones* (2002)."

The return of Palpatine in *The Rise of Skywalker* offered an unexpected dash of flair in the revived Emperor's garb. "I was pleased to see that when he got back to his original self, there was a red gown in the wardrobe that he could wear his black cloak over. A flash of red was allowed, so Palpatine wasn't entirely without vanity," the actor laughs, before concluding, "Of course, he wasn't interested in appearances at all, he was only interested in unlimited power!"

"Palpatine had been responsible, either directly or indirectly, for every evil act throughout these films, so it was a dubious honor to play him again."

That literal duplicity is at the heart of the character.

Yes, and I think it was really important for the story George Lucas was telling in the prequels that you should see someone move up the ladder towards the center of power using the levers of democracy.

These are a series of films primarily aimed at young people, and George was trying to relate to them the real world, showing how someone as clever and complicated and evil as Palpatine could twist and manipulate democracy while appearing to be in favor of it. It was very important to George to tell that part of the story.

Palpatine played a very clever, devious political game, turning the galaxy into his own ultimate

03 Ian McDiarmid as Supreme Chancellor Palpatine in *Revenge of the Sith* (2005).

authoritarian dictatorship. Of course, such figures ultimately fail because they're short termers, they don't really think too far ahead. By disappearing for so long and having various surrogates represent him, like Snoke who was genetically engineered by Palpatine, he was able to work obsessively to build this enormous army so that one day he could obliterate all opposition and move back to the center of things. It was an act of unqualified revenge, really.

Palpatine's problem was he couldn't be the person he was, which was the Emperor at the end of *Return of the Jedi*, until certain things were in place, which were all to do with the relationship between Rey and Kylo Ren, and we know how that worked out for him.

Speaking of Rey and Kylo Ren, you shared your scenes with co-stars Daisy Ridley and Adam Driver. How was that experience?

I was so lucky to be working with two such brilliant actors. I spent a good amount of time with Daisy, and I would have loved a bit more time with Adam, but that was the nature of our scenes together. My first day on set was the first scene of the film, as Kylo Ren made his way through the caverns of Exegol and confronted me. The scene changed in all sorts of ways but basically the relationship stayed the same. It was about two characters experiencing danger at the same time, and



BACK IN A FORTNITE

The opening crawl for *The Rise of Skywalker* began with this chilling announcement: “The dead speak! The galaxy has heard a mysterious broadcast, a threat of revenge in the sinister voice of the late Emperor Palpatine.”

But what exactly did that voice say?

Players of the videogame Fortnite, joining a *Star Wars*-themed in-game event just prior to the movie’s release, were the ones who got to hear it. The Emperor’s gravelly tones, performed by McDiarmid himself, sent this sinister message to the galaxy:

“At last the work of a generation is complete. The great error is corrected. The day of victory is at hand. The day of revenge. The day of the Sith!”

► that’s always an exciting thing for an actor to play.

There are many great things about Adam’s acting ability and versatility, but what really struck me was his amazing concentration, when we were close, eyeball to eyeball. I didn’t know at that time

“In the end, we decided that he should be the Emperor that everyone knows from *Jedi* and I think that was absolutely the best decision.”

they were going to replace my eyeballs (*laughs*), of course. He was wonderful to work with and just great to chat with. And he’s so tall!

Daisy is delightful. She sings a lot before each take to get herself in the mood, which is great. She’s got a very good voice, actually; she should do a musical one day. She’s entirely concentrated but in a completely different way to Adam, and she was always worried that I might fall off or get dizzy when I was zooming in and out in Palpatine’s contraption. I wasn’t worried because I quite like heights anyway, and I knew I was in very safe hands. There were four guys who were manipulating the contraption and the guy who was in charge could stop it at any time.

I could stop it if I wanted to, but I didn’t want to at all. I loved zooming around.

Was that contraption as uncomfortable as it looked?

We did a lot of fittings for the contraption. The original plan would have had me resting on my knees throughout, which would have been a little difficult as it would have put a strain on my back. That was so they could get closer to me for the close-up shots, but thankfully they discovered that they could do all of that quite happily with me just standing up and being swung around, so that’s what we settled for in the end.

Palpatine is in pretty unappealing shape in *The Rise of Skywalker*.

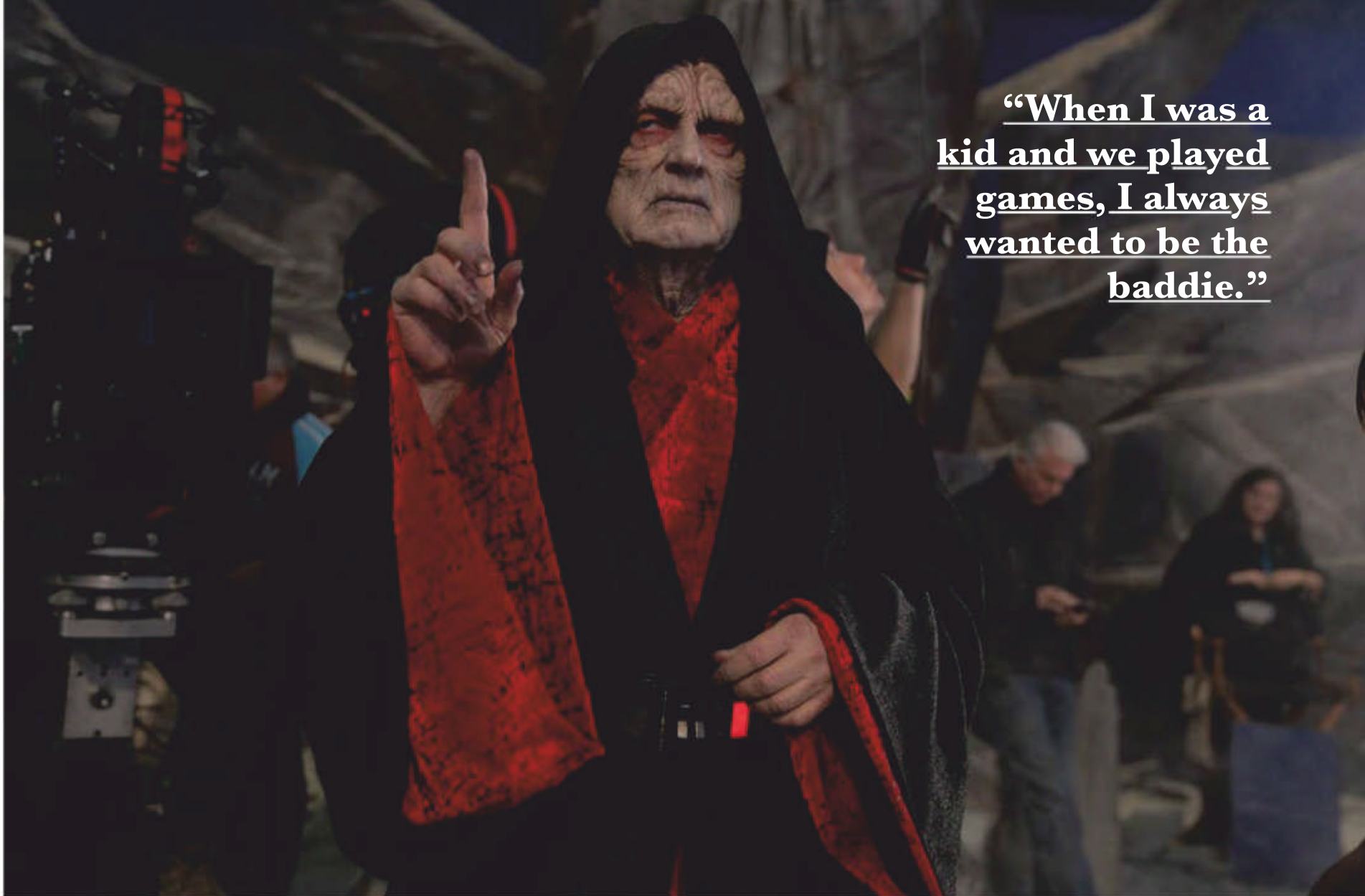
Was the makeup application very different to those for *Return of the Jedi* and *Revenge of the Sith*?

Interestingly enough, Lucy Sibbick, who was in charge of my face, and Martin Rezzard, who was in charge of my hands and other parts of the body, wanted to get close to what Nick Dudman had done for *Return of the Jedi*, because this is what the Emperor wanted to be again. There were discussions about what he would look like when he was returned to full power, and at one point it was thought that he would be much younger, which I would



“When I was a kid and we played games, I always wanted to be the baddie.”

05



06



07



have been interested in, but in the end, we decided that he should be the Emperor that everyone knows from *Jedi* and I think that was absolutely the best decision.

I would go in every morning and place myself in their very talented and capable hands, and as it was with Nick, we started off fairly slowly and gathered pace as shooting went on. The first makeup, before Palpatine's power is returned to him, was like a theatrical make-up. I loved it. It looked very strange, even on set, and much as you see it in the movie. It was very odd and very pale around the mouth, like a face that had sort of sunk into itself. Kind of appropriate. And the lighting by Dan Mindel was just

brilliant. Later on they removed my eyes, though thankfully that was done digitally.

With Palpatine ending his days as a cloud of ash, what mark has he left on you?

When I was a kid and we played games, I always wanted to be the baddie, and when I started out as an actor those were the parts that were attractive to me. Many actors will tell you the same, because you can get your teeth into the baddies, so to have ended up playing the evillest creature in the *Star Wars* saga is weirdly satisfying.

It was exciting early on because Palpatine was merely an ordinary

04 McDiarmid and Adam Driver prepare for Palpatine's first scene.

05 The fully rejuvenated Emperor Palpatine.

06 Palpatine exerts his Sith powers.

07 Rey (Daisy Ridley) confronts Palpatine in *The Rise of Skywalker*.

politician. There was no apparent side to him, he was just doing a job and serving Naboo. I knew all the time what he really was and what he was doing, but it was exciting playing someone who appeared to be doing good while secretly practicing the worst possible kind of evil you could conceive of. That's what's great about his name—Darth Sidious. He's always insidiously, hideously there, throughout all the movies. That I could help finish off this great saga with that revelation, I could never have dreamt I'd be so lucky. In a sense it's been a series of strokes of luck. When J.J. called, I thought it wasn't so much a case of third time lucky, but lucky for the third time (*laughs*). 🙌

THE STORY OF OUR STAR WARS STORIES

Our Star Wars Stories producer Dan Brooks takes *Insider* behind the scenes of the compelling online documentary series that puts the saga's fans in the spotlight.

WORDS: DAN BROOKS

I am in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, sitting in the kitchen of the Hinton family. From here, along with a few others, I'm watching Jordan Hembrough—pop-culture expert and former host of *Toy Hunter*—talk eye-to-eye with Zoe, 18. She's the eldest daughter of the Hinton clan. The topic is *Star Wars*. But not really.

Their conversation covers lots more ground. How Zoe loved the *Star Wars: The Clone Wars* animated series, growing up with and learning from Ahsoka Tano—the saga's first starring female Jedi. That Zoe connected so deeply with *Star Wars Rebels*' Sabine Wren, she began cosplaying as the character, crafting homemade armor and weaponry. And her decision to study film due to the impact of *Star Wars* on her life and the inspiration of George Lucas.

A constant throughout each thread, however, is Zoe's dad, Mike.

He's here, too, standing to my right, just out of shot. A member of the 501st Legion costuming fan group, Mike introduced Zoe to *Star Wars* at an early age. They build their costumes together. They go to see every new film release together. They love *Star Wars* and each other.

Suddenly, Jordan starts talking about his own childhood. About his father. He says they didn't have much to bond over, but they had

Star Wars. His voice filled with emotion, Jordan asks Zoe directly about her own relationship with her dad.

"I don't know if I would love *Star Wars* the way I do if it wasn't for him," she says, tearing up. Jordan calls Mike in. He hugs his daughter. Around the room, people are wiping away tears, myself included.

This is how we make and tell *Our Star Wars Stories*.



01

02



03



Human Stories

As a producer on *Our Star Wars Stories* and editor of *StarWars.com*, I've been involved with the series (available on both *StarWars.com* and YouTube) since the beginning. Almost. The story of *Our Star Wars Stories* starts with Jordan, producer and host of the show, and in surprising circumstances.

From 2012 to 2014, Jordan traveled the country visiting collectors as host of the Travel Channel's *Toy Hunter*. Sometimes he'd uncover a gem tucked away in a dusty attic. Other times, complete sets of long-discontinued lines. What he didn't count on, however, was finding something completely unexpected: inspiration for another series altogether.

"We would be on the road meeting all these incredible people who had a passion, whether it be for collecting toys, or just a fan of a franchise. And they had these incredible stories about how these franchises and movies were affecting their lives," Jordan tells me. "I decided then and there. I said, 'We really have to start telling these stories, because they're so wonderful.'"

A couple of years later, Jordan would have an opportunity

01 Host Jordan Hembrough (left) with the Perales family.

02 Toy collector Dale Hopkins (right).

03 501st founder Albin Johnson (left) talks with Jordan.

04 Droid builder Christina Cato (left).



04

to bring that idea to fruition. He connected with Mickey Capoferri, Lucasfilm's senior director of online content and programming (and my boss); as it happened, Lucasfilm and Mickey were already exploring the possibility of a series focused on *Star Wars* fans at the same time.

Developing the concept together, Jordan and Mickey decided the show wouldn't be about collections or the material side of fandom. They would go deeper. "We wanted to find a way to feature and showcase

some of the amazing *Star Wars* fans from around the world, and show how *Star Wars* can truly impact someone's life. Not just in an entertainment way, but in an emotional and a beneficial way," says Mickey. "We wanted these to be human stories, and stories with deep emotional resonance."

From there, it was just a matter of figuring out what that would actually look like onscreen. Mickey, as executive producer, assembled a core creative group: Alan Griswold, an old friend and collaborator, would direct, leading his team from production company Monkey Deux; Matt Martin of the Lucasfilm Story Group came onboard to produce; and I joined the team as a producer and writer. (Tony Sherg, the *StarWars.com* team's designer, created all the graphics.) ▶

"We wanted to find a way to feature and showcase some of the amazing *Star Wars* fans from around the world, and show how *Star Wars* can truly impact someone's life."

MICKEY CAPOFERRI, EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

05



05 Budding filmmaker Zoe Hinton gets behind the camera.

06 Zoe shows off her self-made Mandalorian armor.

07 Producer Dan Brooks (left) on location.

08 (Left to right) Alan Griswold, John Lizzio, Bernie Ozol, Jordan Hembrough, Mike Hinton, Zoe Hinton, Duncan McCabe, Matt Martin, Dan Brooks, and John Harper.

09 Director Alan Griswold talks Zoe through setting up a camera.

► Together, we vetted interviewee candidates (most of whom Jordan discovered—to be clear, he’s a true producer and creative force on *Our Star Wars Stories*), and dialed in the look, feel, and tone of the show.

“We wanted it to be serious. Serious, but fun,” Mickey says. “You know, we’re dealing with some subjects like cancer, like discrimination, so we wanted to have respect for that.” Some early ideas, like a freeze-frame “stats” list of the fans’ favorite *Star Wars* characters and movies, were thrown around and ultimately dismissed as feeling gimmicky or superfluous or just not right.

“I’d been part of the fandom for a really long time,” Matt says. “So I had a really wide view of what fandom was. For *Our Star Wars Stories*, I really wanted to be able to showcase that.”

At the time, I was watching a lot of *Anthony Bourdain: Parts Unknown*, in which Bourdain went

to cities around the world, talking with all kinds of people about food, culture, and local life. I loved how that show could bounce from earnest to goofy to tragic and back again, and saw similarities with what we were trying to accomplish. With our small crew we could never capture what *Parts Unknown* did visually, but tonally we could, and that was my personal North Star in terms of feel and, ultimately, in writing for the interviews. In the end, I think *Our Star Wars Stories* landed somewhere in that zone: it’s Jordan going to different places, sitting down and talking with someone about the good, the bad, and the uplifting, all couched within their *Star Wars* experience.

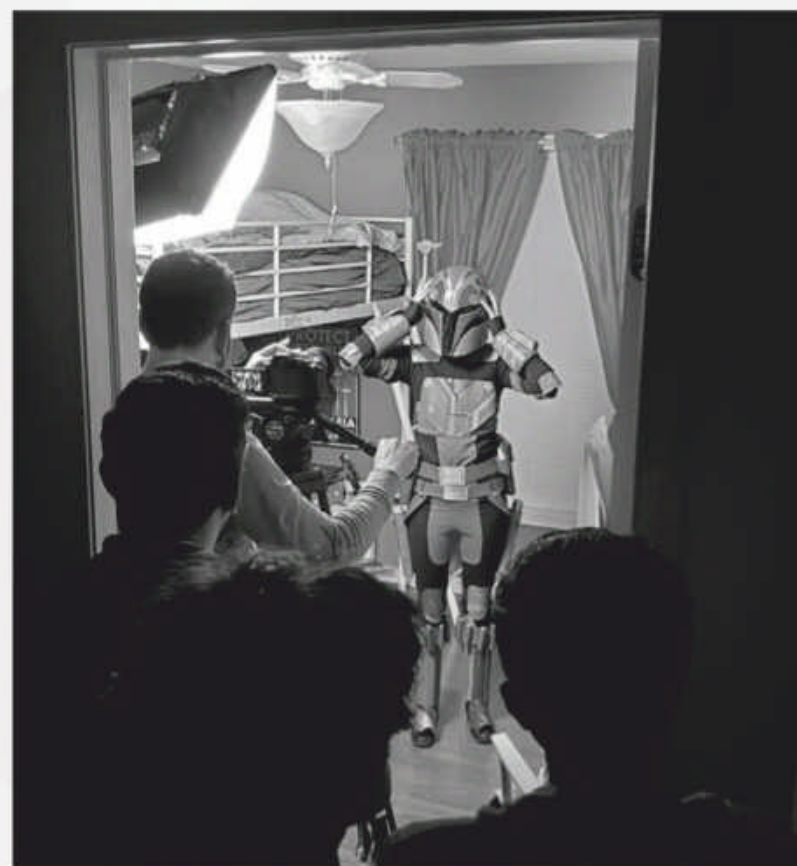
Making the Show

Choosing which fans to feature is maybe the most important decision we make. And it ain’t “all too easy,” as Darth Vader might say.

We try to make the episodes diverse in every sense of the word. We want unique stories; we want fans of different sexes, races, sexual orientation, nationalities. We want, in other words, to represent what a fandom looks like. And it looks like anyone and everyone.

“From the very beginning, we wanted these to be diverse, and we went out of our way to really make sure that these stories had a wide range,” Mickey says. “An underlying

06



07



“The *Star Wars* of this show is more of an ice-breaker than it is the spine of the story.”

**ALAN GRISWOLD,
DIRECTOR**

SEASON 1

EPISODE 1: Albin Johnson and the Power of Fandom

EPISODE 2: How *Star Wars* Sparked Robin's Journey

EPISODE 3: Christina Cato and the Drive to Create

EPISODE 4: How *Star Wars* Showed FJ That It's OK to Be Yourself

EPISODE 5: The Perales Family and the Binding Force of *Star Wars*

SEASON 2

EPISODE 1: Dale Hopkins and Finding Strength in *Star Wars*

EPISODE 2: Zoe Hinton and the Creative Spark of *Star Wars*

EPISODE 3: Jason Eaton and His Incredible *Star Wars* Models

EPISODE 4: How Brandon Jackson Discovered Hope and New Talents Through *Star Wars*

EPISODE 5: Keri Bean: From a Galaxy Far, Far Away to Mars

EPISODE 6: Amy Chrzanowski and Seeing Oneself in *Star Wars*

EPISODE 7: How Josh and Barry Made a Life-Changing *Star Wars* Connection

EPISODE 8: Amiyrah Martin's Fantastic *Star Wars* Family

EPISODE 9: The Many Ways that *Star Wars* Inspired Justice Schiappa

EPISODE 10: The DIY Spirit of Filmmaker Eduardo Sanchez

EPISODE 11: The Rebel Heritage of Lee Francis

EPISODE 12: Tintoy Chuo's Fight to Save an Ancient Art with *Star Wars*



08

intent of this series was to show the broad scope of fans. You know, the hope is that everyone out there can see themselves in one of these people, and realize they're not alone and there are others out there just like them."

I believe this is reflected in the stories we've told thus far. We've produced 17 episodes of *Our Star Wars Stories* across two seasons, all showcasing varied experiences from very different people. Among the fans featured are Albin Johnson, founder of the 501st Legion who lost his daughter to cancer, in a deeply emotional installment; Robin Bocra, a collector and doctor who took an interest in science because

of *Star Wars*; Christina Cato, who taught herself how to build droids; Jason Eaton, a supremely gifted fan modelmaker; Brandon Jackson, a Navy veteran who has dealt with PTSD through *Star Wars*; Amiyrah Martin, who homeschools her children with *Star Wars*-inspired lessons; and Tintoy Chuo, who is trying to save an ancient form of puppetry by fusing it with the galaxy far, far away.

"*Star Wars* has the best fans around. They are so passionate about the love of the franchise. They all have this incredible story. They all have their story to tell," Jordan says. "I want it to go beyond the normal, 'I love the movies and I

have the toys.' Because everybody loved the movies and everyone had the toys. I want it to go beyond that. I ask people to consider their life like an onion, and I want to go deep into the different layers of that onion. So I ask people to talk to me about *Star Wars* and how it's affected them in a meaningful way, in a happy way, or helped them maybe go through a tragedy. Maybe inspire them. I want a lot of folks to dig deeper than the normal fan story."

Productions for *Our Star Wars Stories* are (or were, in the pre-pandemic world) run-and-gun, a whirlwind of travel, hotels, and 9-hour plus shoots. Alan and John Harper (of the StarWars.com team, and a new producer for Season Two) lay out a schedule so that we can film, say, three or four episodes along



09

► the East or West Coast in the span of about a week; associate producers Anina Walas and AJ Camarillo and Monkey Deux's Alyse Gellis offer additional planning support. The producers will typically fly from location to location, while Alan and his camera crew, including John Lizzio and Duncan McCabe, make the long drives with all of their equipment. We've usually scouted the fans' homes in advance via photographs, so we know going in which room will make the most sense for shooting. On the day of the shoot, we'll get to the interviewee's house early, set dress as needed (I am the official "action-figure poser"), position all the cameras (typically three, all capturing different angles), and go over the questions with Jordan before we begin, though of course, he improvises as the interview goes on. Matt and I monitor from behind the camera, listening for any flubs or missed questions or new opportunities. For his part as

10



director, Alan makes himself as invisible as he can.

"I want to bring as little of my agenda as possible," Alan says of his approach. "I enjoy the surprise of these people's lives and these people's stories." A benefit of being a lean-and-mean crew is that we can make decisions quickly or change things up. When Jordan called Zoe's dad into the room, it wasn't pre-planned. But Alan was ready to go with a handheld camera to capture the moment.

"I think that's where the magic happens," Alan says. "With a format like this, the show lends itself to going where the story takes it. And Jordan is very good at pulling out those stories."

The show really comes together in the edit—we'll capture an hour or so of conversation, and whittle it down to 5-10 minutes. Frank Knight, an editor of *The Star Wars Show*, cuts *Our Star Wars Stories*, and we all weigh in on what goes into each episode and where. One

"This is more than a hosting gig for me. Working on the show has been one of the greatest joys of my life."

JORDAN HEMBROUGH,
HOST



thing I love about this part of the process is that it's really all-hands on deck, and everyone's opinion counts. Jermaine Stegall then writes an original score, and we have an episode. During lockdown installments were created virtually, but the core and heart of *Our Star Wars Stories* remained the same.

"The *Star Wars* of this show is more of an ice-breaker than it is the spine of the story. You're getting into people's lives," Alan says. "Each of the episodes we've done, the stories are very different, the people are very different. Their perspectives on the world are different, how they have interacted with the world of *Star Wars* is different. And that's what's really special."

Everyone Has a *Star Wars* Story

Each episode starts with the words, "Everyone has a *Star Wars* story." It's a mantra and jumping off point for the series, but it's come to mean something more to those of us working on it; I can safely say for everyone involved that the privilege of making the series is now a big part of our own *Star Wars* stories.

"Working on the show, it helps me reconnect with my *Star Wars* fandom roots, because that's what really got me in the door at Lucasfilm to begin with," says Matt. "It's nice to just go out and experience people's love for something, and it's something that I care about."

Alan recalls shooting Albin Johnson's episode as an experience he'll always remember. Filming outside in the heat of a South Carolina summer, Albin told of how his 6-year-old daughter, Katie, received a cancer diagnosis that had a very low survivor rate. Katie loved the scene in *Star Wars: Attack of the Clones* (2002) where R2-D2 watches over Padmé as she sleeps, and Albin was determined to build her a droid—but there was not enough time for him to do it alone. The R2 Builders Club, another fan group, came to the rescue and made a fully functioning astromech, R2-KT, that Katie enjoyed before

01



she passed away at the age of 7. In subsequent years, Albin has sent R2-KT to children's hospitals to comfort other kids dealing with illness. "Listening to his story and having two young girls of my own... I'm in tears, and having to wipe the tears out of my eyes so I can look through the viewfinder of the camera, because my heart is breaking for what he has gone through," Alan says. "And yet at the same time, the positivity that Albin brought from that experience, the way he and the *Star Wars* community around him transformed that moment into something that real good has come from, I think that will always be the prime example of not only what the show can be, but also the reason this show is important to do."

For Jordan, *Our Star Wars Stories* is a personal expression and project. "This is more than a hosting gig

10 (Top to bottom) *Our Star Wars Stories* guests Tintoy Chuo, Amy Chrzanowski, Robin Bocra, Jason Eaton, FJ DeRobertis, Amiyrah Martin, and Justice Schiappa.

11 Zoe Hinton prepares to tell her *Star Wars* story to Jordan Hembrough.

for me. Working on the show has been one of the greatest joys of my life," Jordan says. "I share the same experience as a lot of these folks. The most formative years of my life were impacted by *Star Wars* and it got me through dark times. I want to be able to share the stories that all of these other people have. *Star Wars* is home to me."

And for Mickey, the series illustrates one thing. "The different ways people interpret the stories, and the different parts of the saga that resonate with people, I think that really shows the power of *Star Wars*."

What I'm most proud of is that we've made a show that is honest. People have opened their homes and hearts to us, telling us stories of inspiration, tragedy, and hope. And that's why I love *Our Star Wars Stories*. It's not really about *Star Wars*. It's about life. I can't wait to make more. 🥰



Princesses of Alderaan

The Voices of Leia Organa

Talented voice artists Catherine Taber, Clarissa Yazzie, Anna Graves, Julie Dolan, Misty Lee, and Shelby Young are among the performers who have taken on the mantle of Leia Organa, the iconic role originated by Carrie Fisher, in a variety of animated projects. *Star Wars Insider* discovers what the character and Fisher's performance has meant to each of them.

WORDS: AMY RICHAU


**H**

aving portrayed Princess Leia Organa of Alderaan in *Star Wars: A New Hope* (1977),

Carrie Fisher left an indelible mark on popular culture. Leia was forthright, independent, and a force to be reckoned with—character traits fully embodied by Fisher herself—and unlike more traditional princesses in countless fairytales, she was no damsel in distress either. As such, Leia became a role model for young girls also eager to break the mold.

Despite the tragic loss of Carrie Fisher in 2016, the character she defined lives on in the performances of other actors who have been cast as Leia in numerous *Star Wars* projects over the years, from mobile phone apps and videogames to animated appearances in the likes of *Star Wars Rebels* (2014-2018), *Star Wars Resistance* (2018-2020) and *Forces of Destiny* (2017-2018).

In tribute to Fisher, *Star Wars Insider* spoke to six of those actors about their experiences playing such an iconic character, and their favorite Leia and Carrie Fisher moments.





Main Picture: Carrie Fisher as General Leia Organa in *Star Wars: The Last Jedi* (2017).

Opposite Page: The voices of Leia (Clockwise) Catherine Taber, Shelby Young, Julie Dolan, Clarissa Yazzie Garcia, Anna Graves, and Misty Lee.

01



► Landing Leia

While most of the performers landed the role of Leia after years in the voice-over business, the journey was different for each of them. Voicing Leia was the first professional acting job for Clarissa Yazzie Garcia, whose only previous experience had been in high school and college theater productions, and she faced a unique challenge in her interpretation of Leia—providing the character’s voice for the Navajo translation of *A New Hope* (the first feature film ever to be dubbed into the Navajo language).

Surprisingly, Garcia had not seen *A New Hope* in its entirety until a few days before she auditioned for the role. “Princess Leia had always caught my attention though, even from the short bits of *Star Wars* I’d seen over the years,” says Garcia. “There was something about Carrie Fisher’s onscreen presence that made me very fond of her.”

When Shelby Young got the call to audition for *Forces of*

“It’s strange, but it kind of felt like Carrie was there, saying, ‘Just do it, kid. You’ve got this.’”

Misty Lee

Destiny, all she knew was that the production was looking for a young Leia-like voice, but that was enough information for her to start preparing. “Leia’s voice was one I already knew well but had never tried to match,” recalls Young. “I only had one day to work on it, so I studied hard, re-watching *A New Hope* and pausing and rewinding every Leia scene, reciting along with her dialogue.”

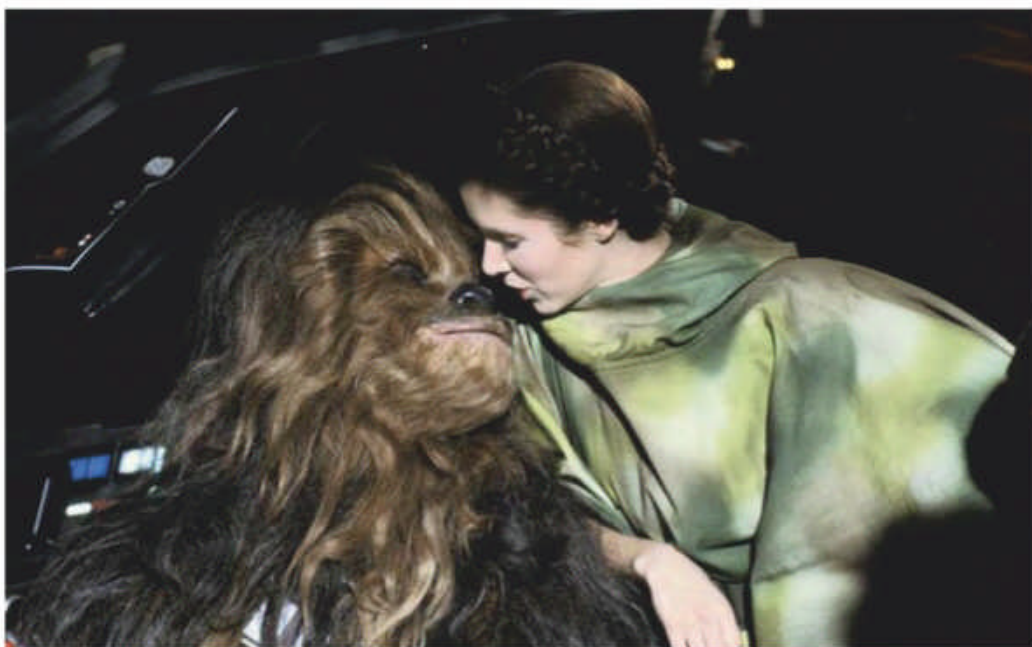
Anna Graves had already voiced Mandalore’s leader, Dutchess Satine Kryze, in episodes of *The Clone Wars* before she first voiced Leia for a *Star Wars* pinball app, auditioning by imitating Fisher’s performance in *A New Hope*. After voicing a rebel soldier for the *Star Wars* Battle

Pod arcade game, Graves received word she had booked another mystery job. “They wouldn’t tell me what the game was or who I’d be playing,” remembers Graves, “And the secrecy was very exciting. It wasn’t until I showed up at the session that I found out I was

02



03



voicing young Princess Leia Organa for Disney Infinity 3.0. It felt like something I had been working towards for years.”

Julie Dolan’s first job as Leia also came from a voice-match recording of some of Leia’s most memorable dialogue. “My agent called me one day and asked me if I could sound like Princess Leia. My first response was ‘Um, probably not,” laughs Dolan. “She sent me the famous hologram speech and told me to work on sounding like her, record it, and send it back, which I did.

“Apparently they auditioned over 200 voices the first time around but didn’t find what they were looking for,” Dolan continues. “Then they brought in Carrie Fisher, but her voice had changed since making the original movie so they had *another* round of auditions—200 more voices—and I was in that group.”

As a result, Dolan became the voice of Leia for the *Star Tours* attraction at Disney parks around the world. “After I’d recorded the lines in the studio, they showed me a video of the hologram scene. I had to ask, ‘Is that my voice or is it Carrie’s?’ and they said ‘Yours.’ We were all blown away. It sounded just like her.” Dolan went on to voice Leia in several other

projects, including the television series *Star Wars Rebels* and *LEGO Star Wars: The Freemaker Adventures* (2016-2017).

Playing Leia

Catherine Taber has the distinction of having played characters from multiple generations of the Skywalker clan, having been the voice of Padmé Amidala in *Star Wars: The Clone Wars* (2008-2014, 2020), Disney Infinity 3.0, and *Forces of Destiny*. Taber also voiced

Mission Vao in *Star Wars: Knights of the Old Republic* before she was cast as Leia in *Star Wars: The Force Unleashed*, a role she reprised for the game’s sequel.

Taber believes her familiarity with both characters made all the difference

when landing the role. “I’ve always thought of Leia as a combination of Anakin and Padmé,” says Taber. “She can exhibit Padmé’s grace and royal countenance, but she also has that super fiery and impetuous side that comes out, which she is less able to control than Padmé could. For better or for worse, I think Leia favors her father.”

Despite the variety of media in which they portrayed Leia, each of the actors found new depth and understanding of the character and her beliefs, and enjoyed adding

“There was something about Carrie Fisher’s onscreen presence that made me very fond of her.”

Clarissa Yazzie



LEIA LUNCHES

Despite having voiced the same character over the years, several of the actors who’d played Leia had never met until Misty Lee put out the call for a “Leia Lunch.” Since then, the actresses have come together regularly to catch up, share stories, laugh, and support each other’s careers.

Playing the same iconic character created a unique bond for the group. “It’s the awesomeness of Leia,” said Taber, “She’s a character who represents the best in women and, in so many ways, that’s what brought us together and has made us such good friends.”

new shades to her. Julie Dolan played a younger Leia in the animated series, *Star Wars Rebels*. “One of my favorite lines was when Leia consoles Ezra after he learns that his parents were killed,” says Dolan. “He asks her why she fights when she doesn’t have to because she is a princess. Leia replies, ‘I fight for those who cannot, and I think you might be the same way.’ That is when she and Ezra bonded.”

Shelby Young was pleased to be involved in bringing an important moment to life for Leia in *Forces of Destiny*. “I love when Luke throws Leia his lightsaber in ‘Traps and Tribulations,’” she says. “Knowing that I voiced Leia’s first canonical moment wielding a lightsaber is just *insane* for a fangirl like me. I also love ‘Bounty of Trouble,’ where Sabine tries to

01 Mark Hamill and Carrie Fisher having fun on the set of *A New Hope* (1977).

02 Fisher and Harrison Ford between takes while filming *The Empire Strikes Back* (1980)

03 A stolen moment for Carrie and Chewie (Peter Mayhew).



04

05

► figure out how to properly address Leia when they first meet, stumbling between princess and senator, and Leia says it's just, 'Leia,' and follows up by saying, "I hope one day we can fight together." That line has always stuck with me. It really sums her character up in one short sentence."

Performing as Leia could prove as daunting as it was exciting, as Misty Lee discovered when providing the voice for Leia in the 2015 videogame *Star Wars: Battlefront*.

"About halfway through the recording session I had to deliver the line, 'Good luck—and may the Force be with you,'" Lee remembers. "I'd been doing fine until that moment, but as soon as that line appeared, I *freaked*. I started to hyperventilate." Lee had to take a break from recording to gather herself, and thinking about Carrie Fisher helped put her back on track. "It's strange, but it kind of felt like Carrie was there, saying, 'Just do it, kid. You've got this,'" says Lee. "I was immediately able to settle into doing the best I could."

Lee was later called upon to incorporate motion capture into her performance for the follow-up, *Star Wars: Battlefront II*—not only having to sound like Leia but move like her too. Working closely with the game's director, Tom Keegan, Lee was able to adopt a physicality that echoed Fisher's. "There were iconic things that Carrie did in

those movies, like a head-tilt, that we really wanted to grab and honor," Lee says.

For Disney Infinity 3.0, Anna Graves had the challenge of adding new elements to her performance

as Leia that weren't in Fisher's original portrayal, namely making fighting noises that suited the game's action-orientated gameplay. Graves was also charged with delivering iconic lines of dialogue from the movies in

new ways. "A lot of the lines were reminiscent of the original dialogue but moved the story in a faster and more efficient way, so that the player could get to the action of the battles," Graves explains. "So I loved that I got to personally

"Knowing that I voiced Leia's first canonical moment wielding a lightsaber is just insane for a fangirl like me."

Shelby Young

deliver Leia's message regarding the information stored in R2-D2 to Obi-Wan Kenobi!"

Recoding the Navajo version of *A New Hope* threw up an interesting timing challenge for Garcia. "When Leia says, 'Will somebody get this big walking carpet out of my way?' the translation for 'big walking carpet' (yaateel di'ili tsoh) took me a few takes," she admits. "It was something of a tongue twister to get the words out as quickly as I could, and still articulate each syllable. At the speed I was saying it, it sounded like I was saying 'dzi'izi tsoh,' which in English is 'big bike!' I took a break and eventually got it right."

Leia's Legacy

Above and beyond the task of crafting their own interpretations of Leia, each of these Princesses of

06



PROJECTING A PRINCESS

Finding Leia's voice was a unique challenge for each actor. Misty Lee felt Leia's voice was not dissimilar to her regular tones so just added a little Mae West. Shelby Young found herself occasionally scrunching up her nose for some lines of dialogue, and pitching her voice from further back in her throat to achieve a rounder tone.

Beyond matching the pitch and timber of Leia, finding the spirit of the character was also key. Anna Graves went for a combination of diplomacy and confrontation when voicing Leia, while Clarissa Yazzie made sure she delivered every line with purpose and importance.



07

Alderaan holds Carrie Fisher's original performance close to their hearts. So, what are their favorite movie moments?

Garcia points to Leia's first encounter with Darth Vader in *A New Hope*. "That brief exchange with Vader encapsulated who she was," she says. "And right in that moment, I became Team Leia. Regardless of her circumstance, she was always strong and confident in her stance."

The detention block sequence in which Leia took firm control of her own rescue, also made a big impression. "I absolutely love Carrie's delivery of 'Into the garbage chute, fly boy,'" says Lee. "She's so annoyed, and it's such a non-princessy thing to say. It's magic." Catherine Taber remembers the same scene as a defining moment for the character. "'Somebody has to save our skins!' It's classic Leia. Calm under pressure, witty to the end, and no one's victim."

"My favorite film for Leia is *Star Wars: The Empire Strikes Back* (1980)," says Dolan, who admires

04 Anna Graves provided Leia's voice in *Star Wars Rebels* (2014-2018).

05 Misty Lee played Leia in *Star Wars: Battlefront II* (2017).

06 Shelby Young's Leia was the first to wield a lightsaber on screen.

07 Young voiced Leia in four episodes of *Star Wars: Forces of Destiny* (2017-2018).

Leia's sassy confidence. "*Empire* really helped me develop my Leia for *Rebels*. She was growing up. She was in charge of troops, learning to strategize, and discovering who she was in the Rebel Alliance. She becomes a tough soldier *and* falls in love!"

Anna Graves loves Leia's confidence in *Star Wars: Return of the Jedi* (1983). "She was in the thick of the action on Endor, fighting stormtroopers," says Graves. "I love the scene where she acknowledged what she'd felt all along, about being Luke's sister. And when she asked Han, 'Hold me...' I just melt."

"Leia's story and growth throughout the Skywalker saga makes each movie she's in so special, because they take place at huge milestones throughout her life," Shelby Young notes. "I can't even compare *A New Hope* Leia to *The Force Awakens* Leia. Just like you or me, she had been through so many life experiences that had

made her grow and change, but at her core she knew who she was from the beginning.

"Something I love about Carrie Fisher, from a fellow artist and a fan's perspective, is that she was never afraid to be 100-percent, authentically *Carrie*," Young says. "She was outspoken about important subjects that so many other public figures tend to shy away from."

Garcia adds, "The character Fisher brought to Leia instantly made you feel like you could do anything as a woman."

Carrie Fisher's sharp sense of humor is something

that will also never be forgotten, as Catherine Taber, who voiced Padmé Amidala for seven seasons of *The Clone Wars*, attests, recalling an encounter with Fisher at LEGOLand in 2011. "As they announced my name over the PA system, with great timing Carrie pointed and shouted, 'That's my mother!'" laughs Taber. 🍷

"I've always thought of Leia as a combination of Anakin and Padmé."

Catherine Taber



UNLIMITED POWER! EDITING STAR WARS INSIDER THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE

At 200 issues and counting, former editors of *Star Wars Insider* discuss the magazine's history and high points.

WORDS: CHRISTOPHER COOPER

T

here's a lot of love that goes into the magazine you're reading. Passion, even, and a

great deal of hard work. From writers too numerous to list, to the designers who've tweaked every layout in our 33-year history; from the various publishers who've been custodians of the magazine, and to the countless others who have played an invaluable part in bringing *Star Wars Insider* to your local bookstore every six weeks or so (global pandemics excepted). Marshalling these efforts, and guiding the unique content that makes *Insider* so special, has been the privilege of its editors. And it all began thanks to another franchise entirely.

"I became a *Star Wars* fan when I was 14 years old," Dan Madsen tells *Star Wars Insider*, the magazine he launched as *The Lucasfilm Fan Club Magazine* in the Fall of 1987. "I was smitten from the very first time I saw the film. I put posters up all over the walls of my bedroom, built the model kits, read the comics. I was a member of the original fan club back in the day, and I loved the *Bantha Tracks* fan club newsletters of the time, which I still have."

Madsen was already a devotee of science fiction when *Star Wars: A New Hope* was released in 1977, especially the 1960s TV series *Star Trek*, so when that franchise made the leap to the big screen in 1979 with *Star Trek: The Motion Picture*, Madsen decided to start a fan club devoted to it. "I worked in a print shop, so I was able to make my newsletter look professional

"WE WERE ALL ALREADY THINKING ABOUT *STAR WARS* WHETHER WE WANTED TO OR NOT, WHETHER WE WERE GETTING PAID FOR IT OR NOT."

SCOTT CHERNOFF

01



"EVERY TIME I THOUGHT I MIGHT MOVE ON, LUCASFILM ANNOUNCED SOMETHING COOL THAT I DIDN'T WANT TO MISS!"

JONATHAN WILKINS

02



01 Guest editor Warwick Davis (right) with former *Insider* editor Jonathan Wilkins.

02 Davis and the editorial team at work on issue 143.

and stand out," he remembers. "It came to the attention of Paramount Pictures, who offered me a license to become official in 1982."

The entrepreneurial Madsen's success with the Official *Star Trek* Fanclub led Lucasfilm to approach him to help relaunch their own brand's fan-focused offering in 1987. "I signed a licensing deal with Lucasfilm with a vision to create an official, full-color magazine that would go out to every member of The Official Lucasfilm Fan Club," says Madsen. "It was something I was fully invested in, as I loved *Star Wars*, and running the fan club gave me exclusive inside access to Lucasfilm and the stars of the films. I was given a private tour of the [Lucasfilm] Archives on my first trip to Skywalker Ranch, which to me was like finding the Holy Grail (which was in there, too!)."

Meanwhile, Lucasfilm was occupied crafting other cinematic

worlds, as evidenced in the title chosen for the club's newsletter. The remit of *The Lucasfilm Fan Club Magazine* was to cover all of the productions that Lucasfilm had in the works at the time, which included *Willow* (1988) and *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade* (1989).

"I spent a week on the sets of both of those productions in the U.K., interviewing the casts and crews for the magazine," Madsen relates. "I was, however, committed to having at least one *Star Wars* feature in every issue, so that we always had a saga presence in there. Keeping the magazine going during the 'dark times' when there was no new *Star Wars* was a challenge. We had to get creative in keeping everything growing and evolving during those lean years," he adds.

Fortunately for the fans of the saga who endured that dry period, the stars of the galaxy were about to realign.

► A Force Reawakens

When it was announced that George Lucas was beginning work on the *Star Wars* prequels, Madsen and Lucasfilm Licensing discussed changing the name of the fan club. “Since the magazine was going to be in the trenches with news, interviews, and firsthand accounts on the making of the films, we wanted to rebrand to reflect that,” says Madsen.

“I wanted fans to know that we were the first and best place to get inside coverage of the prequels, for people who wanted to be on the ‘inside’ of the *Star Wars* world, and Lucasfilm agreed. So, from issue #23 we changed the title to *Star Wars Insider*, and we delivered. In those days the internet

“PRIOR TO ITS RELEASE, *REVENGE OF THE SITH* WAS SUPPOSED TO BE THE FINAL MOVIE IN THE SAGA; AND THE ADRENALINE RUSH OF CHAPERONING THE MAGAZINE AT THE TIME WAS EXCITING.”

BRETT RECTOR

was not yet booming, so printed publications were really the first and best source for scoops on the new films. Being able to share some of the first photos from *Star Wars: The Phantom Menace* (1999) was extremely exciting, because when a new issue of the *Insider* would come out it set the fan world ablaze! I was itching to get each issue out as fast as we could.”

For Madsen, it was a thrilling time to find himself working at the bright center of the *Star Wars* galaxy. “The period before *The Phantom Menace* opened was, in my opinion, the most exciting time to be a *Star Wars* fan,” Madsen asserts. “You have to remember, we were ground zero for all things *Star Wars* in those days. I was running the fan club, publishing *Insider*, managing the *Jawa Trader* catalog, as well as creating our own exclusive collectibles. And, on top of all that, we created and produced the very first *Star Wars* Celebration in Denver, Colorado, in 1999. We felt very keenly the excitement swirling around *Star Wars* at that time. It was

MAGIC MOMENTS

The highlights of editing *Star Wars Insider*.

DAN MADSEN

“Rick McCallum invited me to Skywalker Ranch to see some of the early work they were doing for *The Phantom Menace*—storyboards, art, maquettes, models of ships, and the like—so I had a good idea of the kinds of things I would be seeing when I visited the set a year later. When we were finally able to get on set and actually see what George Lucas was working on, that was an amazing milestone for me.”

SCOTT CHERNOFF

“Don Bies let me operate the remote control R2-D2 on the set of *Attack of the Clones* in Australia, and I promptly crashed it into a wall. In my defense, this was one of the most complicated remote controls I’d ever seen.”

BRIAN J. ROBB

“Seeing George Lucas directing *Star Wars* on set was something few people not directly involved in making the movies ever got to experience. Watching Christopher Lee as Count Dooku pretending to fly his speeder, while two guys behind him flapped his cloak with attached bits of string to simulate wind, was fun!”

JONATHAN WILKINS

“Interviews come in all shapes and sizes, from sitting with Dave Prowse in his dining room as he talked about the fact that he bought his car second-hand from Kenny Baker, to Warwick Davis spending a day with us in the office guest-editing an issue of *Insider* and making us roar with laughter. Speaking to Mark Hamill will always be my favorite memory. I was nervous, but within a few minutes it was just like speaking with a very enthusiastic older brother.”

03



exhilarating to know we were on the precipice of something really huge, and that *Star Wars Insider* was the conduit for us to connect with the fans and show them the amazing things they were about to see.”

Inside *Star Wars*

Despite providing the beating heart of the fan club, Madsen is the first to admit he was no one-man band when it came to putting *Star Wars Insider* together, bringing a team of multi-talented editors and writers into the fold.

“I would speak with a considerable amount of people at Lucasfilm to decide which projects to cover, although it was really up to me as to what made it into the magazine,” says Madsen. “Then I was very lucky to be introduced to Jon Bradley Snyder, who had a passion for *Star Wars* and had published his own fanzine. I recognized in Jon that he had all the right elements to be a fantastic editor for *Insider*, so he came onboard and really directed the editorial content from then on. He and I would sit down for each issue and discuss ideas, but I gave the reins to Jon and he did not disappoint. His work, along with that of Scott Chernoff, was cutting edge and really creative. We did features in the magazine that you would not see in any other publication. I was always impressed with and proud of the coverage we were sending out to *Star Wars* fans all over the world.”

Scott Chernoff’s name should be familiar to fans of anarchic animated

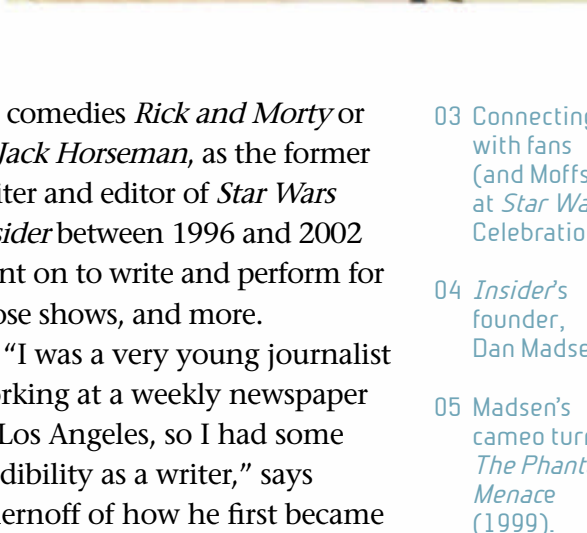
“*STAR WARS INSIDER* HAS PLAYED AN ENORMOUSLY BIG ROLE IN MY LIFE AND I AM INCREDIBLY PROUD TO HAVE LAUNCHED IT.”

DAN MADSEN

04



05



06

TV comedies *Rick and Morty* or *BoJack Horseman*, as the former writer and editor of *Star Wars Insider* between 1996 and 2002 went on to write and perform for those shows, and more.

“I was a very young journalist working at a weekly newspaper in Los Angeles, so I had some credibility as a writer,” says Chernoff of how he first became involved with the magazine. “One day, I stumbled upon a copy of *Star Wars Insider* at a comic-book shop, and couldn’t

03 Connecting with fans (and Moff) at *Star Wars Celebration*.

04 *Insider*’s founder, Dan Madsen.

05 Madsen’s cameo turn in *The Phantom Menace* (1999).

06 Madsen with Kenny Baker and R2-D2.

believe it existed. I bought it and was thrilled to see that the editor-in-chief was a guy named Jon Bradley Snyder, who had previously put out an amazing fanzine called ‘Report from the *Star Wars* Generation.’ One of the articles was written by Jamie Painter, who was a colleague of mine at the newspaper, so I brought the magazine into work the next day and basically begged her to put me in touch with Jon.”

Chernoff’s first commission for *Insider* set the tone for his future work for the magazine, and his subsequent comedy career.

“It was a fun article that turned out to be very funny,” says Chernoff. “I was tasked to track down people who had never seen *Star Wars*, which in pre-social media days was actually quite difficult, but I found a few and the interviews were hilarious—especially when I asked the people to describe what they *thought* the movies were about, based on what they had gleaned from pop culture. I always considered myself a comedy guy who had an amazing day job



► writing about *Star Wars*, so whenever I saw an opportunity to bring humor to the magazine, I jumped at it. The key to making that happen was the leadership of Jon Bradley Snyder and Dan Madsen. Together, they gave me a ton of freedom and trusted me to walk the line between being funny and not doing anything mean to the movies or the fans.”

Chernoff took over from Snyder as Managing Editor from issue #37, and found himself caught up in a whirlwind of opportunity. “One of the many perks was that I got to assign who wrote which article, so of course I assigned myself all the good ones. Sorry, everyone else!” Chernoff laughs. “I was just a fan who knew how to write, and suddenly I was traveling all around and interviewing stars, being one of the only people in the world to read *The Phantom Menace* screenplay and know all the secrets long before it came out, going to Australia to be on the set of *Star Wars: Attack of the Clones* (2002). Right place, right time. I still can’t believe it happened.”

Copy Approved

Over the course of its 200-issue history, *Star Wars Insider* has fallen under the stewardship of several publishers. Wizards of the Coast became the magazine’s new home



07

in 2001 when Dan Madsen decided it was time to move on, although he found it hard to step away from his passion project. “I had worked hard to build the fan club and the magazine into something quite worthwhile, and *Star Wars* was such a huge part of my life. It was a part of my identity,” he says. “But the time was right, and we had to get them both into the hands of someone who could help them grow even bigger.”

Along with taking over the running of the official fan club,

07 Scott Chernoff.

08 Jonathan Wilkins.

09 Brian J. Robb (center) on the set of *Star Wars: Attack of the Clones* (2002).



08

Wizards of the Coast published 11 issues of *Star Wars Insider* before the magazine moved first to Paizo Publishing in 2002, and then to IDG Entertainment in 2004 with issue #77. Incoming editor Brett Rector admits he felt the weight of expectation on his shoulders. “It was such an honor, but at the same time it was very intimidating,” he says.

Rector was writing and editing videogame manuals for LucasArts when he was approached by IDG about taking on the *Insider* editorship. “I was contacted by a former boss of mine, Creative Director Francis Mao, asking if I wanted to become the editor-in-chief of *Star Wars Insider*. Francis knew of my love for *Star Wars* and felt I would be the ideal choice to helm the magazine.”

With *Star Wars: Revenge of the Sith* (2005) about to bring a close to the *Star Wars* saga (for a few years, at least), Rector soon found himself in the thick of it. “We definitely needed to get up to speed quickly,” he recalls. “When I came into the role, we were roughly one year out from *Sith*’s release, so immediately we looked to run interviews from the cast and crew. One of the regular features that had run through the magazine since *The Phantom Menace* was The Prequel Update, in which producer Rick McCallum would give an update

09



on the production of each movie. Absolutely one of the best parts of my job was the trip I regularly made to Skywalker Ranch to meet and speak with Rick. To take that to its conclusion was really special. We also covered the second season of Genndy Tartakovsky's *The Clone Wars* animated show, which ran on Cartoon Network. So, in a time where things were seemingly winding down with *Star Wars*, there was still a ton happening."

Fast forward to the present day and Rector is still involved with *Insider*, now as a key member of Lucasfilm Publishing's editorial team that supports the magazine's current publisher, Titan. From that perspective, what does he think are the key elements that have seen *Star Wars Insider* survive and thrive despite its changes in stewardship? "It's amazing to me how much fresh, compelling content continues to be generated issue by issue," he says, adding that every editor has "continually given respect to the source material, and striven to make each issue better than the last."

A Galaxy Across The Pond

Titan Magazines became the publisher of *Star Wars Insider* in 2007, but the company already had a long association with Lucasfilm, stretching back to 1996 when the first issue of *Star Wars: The Official Magazine* went on sale in the U.K. Initially edited by John Freeman and then Marcus Hearn, Brian J. Robb took charge of the U.K.-produced magazine from 1999 and oversaw its transition to *Star Wars Insider*.

"The rule was that for each issue of our magazine we would originate about 20 percent of our content, and the remainder would be reprints of material from the U.S. *Insider*," Robb explains. "Lucasfilm saw that we were more than capable of producing *Insider*, so Titan was eventually given the opportunity to originate the magazine for the U.S."

Meanwhile, the publishing world was changing, and print media had a new enemy. "Competing with the internet became an increasing issue across my time on *Star Wars*



10 Beginning life as *The Lucasfilm Fanclub Magazine* (issue #1 pictured above), *Star Wars Insider* had several publishers before finding a home at Titan Magazines.

"STAR WARS INSIDER HAS ALWAYS BEEN A GREAT PACKAGE OF EXCLUSIVE CONTENT AND BRILLIANT DESIGN."

BRIAN J. ROBB

Insider," says Robb. "If there was one subject that had many, many pages devoted to it in the web's early years, it was *Star Wars*! Our advantage was that we had access to lots of material that other people simply could not get at."

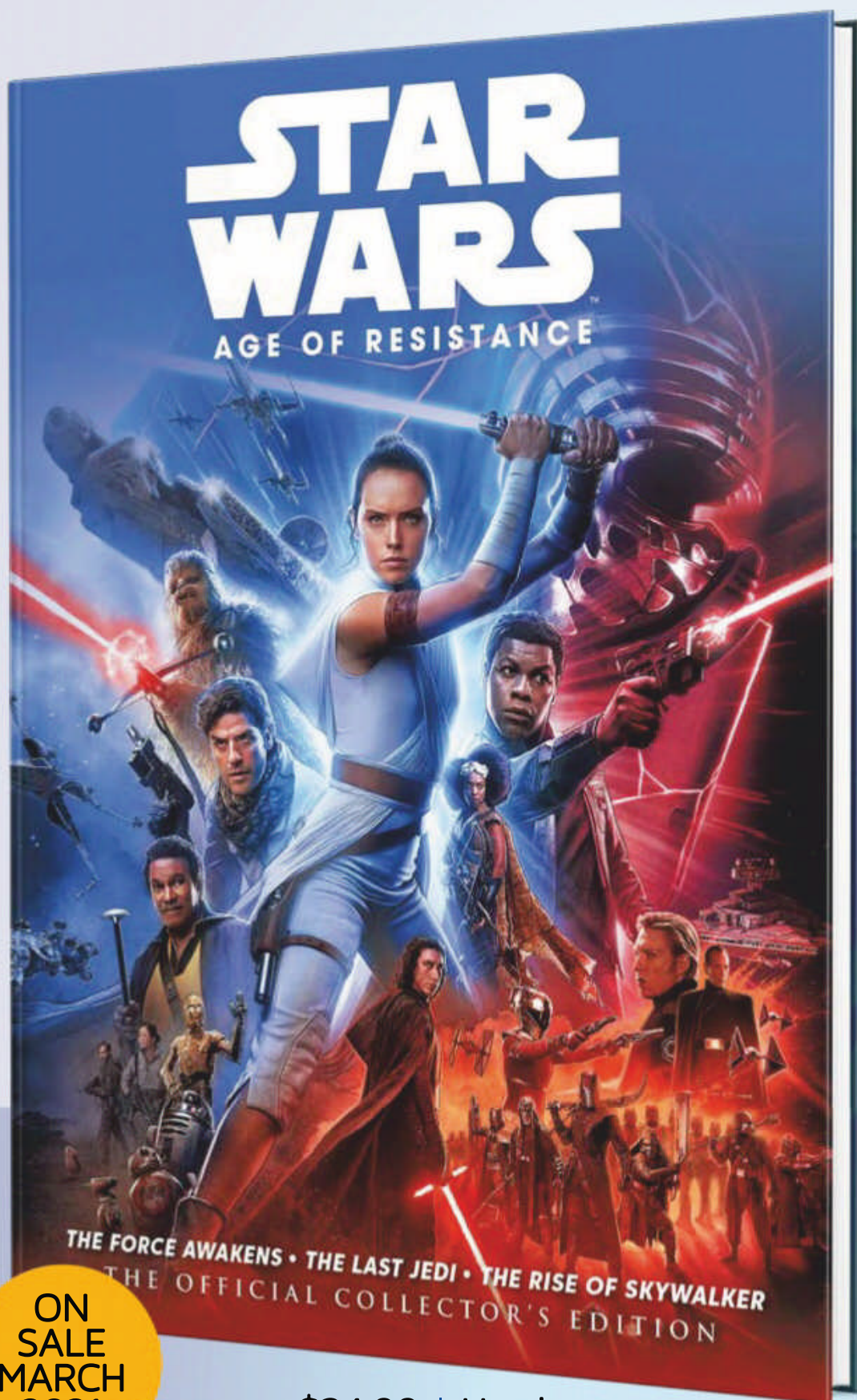
The online competition was something that also vexed the magazine's longest running editor, Jonathan Wilkins. "There is always something going on in the world of *Star Wars*," he says. "Could we beat the internet to big stories? Not every time, but we certainly tried!"

Wilkins was always keen to set *Insider* apart from other outlets through the depth of its content. "I always wanted to make *Insider* more accessible and broader in terms of appeal," he says. "*Star Wars* isn't a cult thing. *Star Wars* is for everybody, and we could see that in the letters we received and the reaction we had from fans at conventions. It's something that unifies people no matter the gender, no matter the age or background."

In that regard, *Star Wars Insider* has retained the original goals set out by Dan Madsen 200 issues ago, to offer fans the official inside track on new developments in the saga.

"I took great pride in sharing my love of *Star Wars* with fans all over the world in *Insider*," says Madsen. "I have such amazing memories of the dedication that went into making each one. Equally, I take pride in each issue that comes out from Titan, to see how the magazine has evolved and survived all these years to reach its 200th issue. Back in 1987, I would've been amazed that that first issue would spawn 199 more, and still be going strong today. I feel like a proud parent!" 🌌

THE FIRST SPECIAL TO CHRONICLE THE MAKING OF THIS BELOVED SEQUEL TRILOGY!



ON
SALE
MARCH
2021

\$24.99 | Hardcover

ISBN: 9781787735767

An all-new hardback deluxe magazine, detailing the making of *The Force Awakens*, *The Last Jedi*, and *The Rise of Skywalker*.

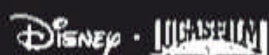
Features exclusive interviews with the cast and crew that brought you the story of Rey, Finn, Poe And Kylo Ren to life!



ALSO
AVAILABLE!
SOFTCOVER
\$19.99

AVAILABLE IN ALL GOOD STORES AND ONLINE

TITAN-COMICS.COM





**Mando
Asset
Giveaway!**

This is the Win!

An action figure bounty from Hasbro.

Action figures have been among the most popular *Star Wars* collectibles since Kenner released their first set of twelve characters back in 1978. Since then, Hasbro's range has continued to expand, with new releases in the Black Series always causing a stir. Now characters from the hit Disney+ show *The Mandalorian* have joined the ranks, and, thanks to our friends at Hasbro, *Star Wars Insider* has a set of three figures to give away.

Heading our 6-inch trio is the Mandalorian himself, clad in his already iconic silver beskar armor and packing an arsenal of deadly weaponry. The highly articulated Black Series action

figure stunningly recreates the bounty hunter's ice-cool look, featuring the rich detail and premium decoration fans expect from the range.

Our giveaway also includes the person responsible for crafting the Mandalorian's gear—The Armorer herself—and a deadly foe in the form of the Incinerator Trooper with his deadly flame projector, as seen in the climactic episodes of Season One.

To be in with a chance of winning this amazing collection of three Black Series *The Mandalorian* action figures from Hasbro, just send us the correct answer to the following *Star Wars* trivia question:

What is the unique clan signet bestowed upon the Mandalorian by The Armorer?

- A) A krayt dragon skull
- B) A foghornleghorn femur
- C) A mudhorn skull

Send your answer to our regular email or postal address (see 'Contact Us' on page 3), marked "THIS IS THE WIN!" by MARCH 22, 2021.

Terms and conditions are available at titanmagazines.com

May the Force be with you!

www.hasbro.com

© and TM 2021 Lucasfilm Ltd. All Rights Reserved.





THE FINAL COUNTDOWN

Insider's guide to the twelve epic episodes that propelled *Star Wars: The Clone Wars* towards its shattering conclusion.

WORDS: KRISTIN BAVER



t's impossible to adequately describe the elation that erupted inside the room at San Diego Comic-Con in 2018 on the day that Lucasfilm announced plans to bring back *Star Wars: The Clone Wars* (2008-14, 2020) for its long-awaited conclusion. For years, supervising director Dave Filoni could only hint at the stories he had hoped to tell to close out the animated series, with animatics and sketchbook pages filling in some of the gaps left by the untold heroics of the Bad Batch and the events of the Siege of Mandalore.

Now, at long last fans can enjoy the emotional conclusion the way it was meant to be experienced, in the form of twelve full-length episodes. Told over three distinct story arcs, the final season of the hit animated series brought us closure and fresh heartbreak as Anakin Skywalker's former Padawan, Ahsoka Tano, made her triumphant return to action, and the events of the show collided with *Star Wars: Revenge of the Sith* (2005) and the execution of Order 66.

With the entire series available to stream on Disney+, we revisit the dramatic events that unfold during *Star Wars: The Clone Wars* Season Seven!

A R C I : ENTER THE BAD BATCH

Executive producer and supervising director Dave Filoni had previously released the unfinished animatic for the Bad Batch story after *The Clone Wars* was originally cancelled. At the time, the tale of Clone Force 99 wasn't intended to be part of the final season of the show, and Filoni never expected to get the chance to tell their story.



EPISODE 1 THE BAD BATCH

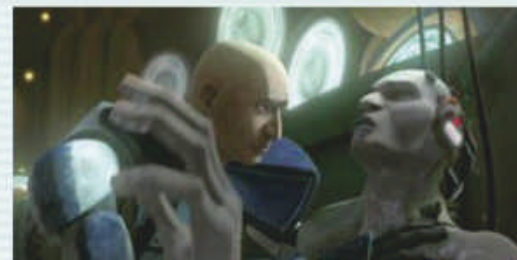
Written by: Brent Friedman
and Matt Michnovetz

Directed by: Kyle Dunlevy

■ On the planet Anaxes, a series of Republic defeats suggests that the Separatists have somehow gained possession of a top-secret military algorithm, a playbook that allows them to flawlessly predict every move the Jedi and their clone army will make on the battlefield. With the help of the elite squad known as Clone Force 99, Captain Rex leads a mission to infiltrate a Separatist cyber center. Unlike their clone brothers, Clone Force 99—named in honor of the fallen Clone

99—aren't uniform copies. Thanks to desirable mutations and defects, the experimental unit consists of the cunning sergeant Hunter, the hulking Wrecker, the technology guru Tech, and the precise sharpshooter Crosshair. They call themselves the Bad Batch.

Using their unique skills and military strategies that are anything but by the book, the Bad Batch is able to break into the command center. But what they find isn't a computer program. It's a live signal beamed from the planet Skako Minor, containing the ghostly voice of Captain Rex's fallen comrade Echo, long thought dead on a mission to the Citadel.



EPISODE 2 A DISTANT ECHO

Written by: Brent Friedman,
Matt Michnovetz, and Dave Filoni

Directed by: Steward Lee

■ After Anakin Skywalker checks in with his secret wife Padmé Amidala, hard at work in the Galactic Senate while the Jedi is away on the Outer Rim sieges, the general leads his clones on the mission to Skako Minor. After smoothing things over with the native Poletecs, who fear that the Republic troopers and the presence of a Separatist base mean their planet is about to be embroiled in the Clone War, they head for the capital city of Purkoll, from which Echo's signal is emanating. Along the way, Captain Rex struggles with the hope that his friend might still be alive and the very real possibility that the whole thing is simply a Separatist trap.

The stealth mission goes awry once they reach the Separatist tower, but the team is ultimately able to breach the doors to uncover a gruesome discovery. As Wat Tambor says, Echo's mind belongs to the Separatists. Inside a stasis chamber, what's left of the clone lies entombed, a twisted snare of cables tethering his nervous system to the Separatist network. His lower half has been completely replaced by machinery, as well as what used to be his right arm. Once he's awoken, Rex tries to soothe his friend, who has no memory of what's transpired since he was trying to escape from the Citadel with the rest of his squadron.

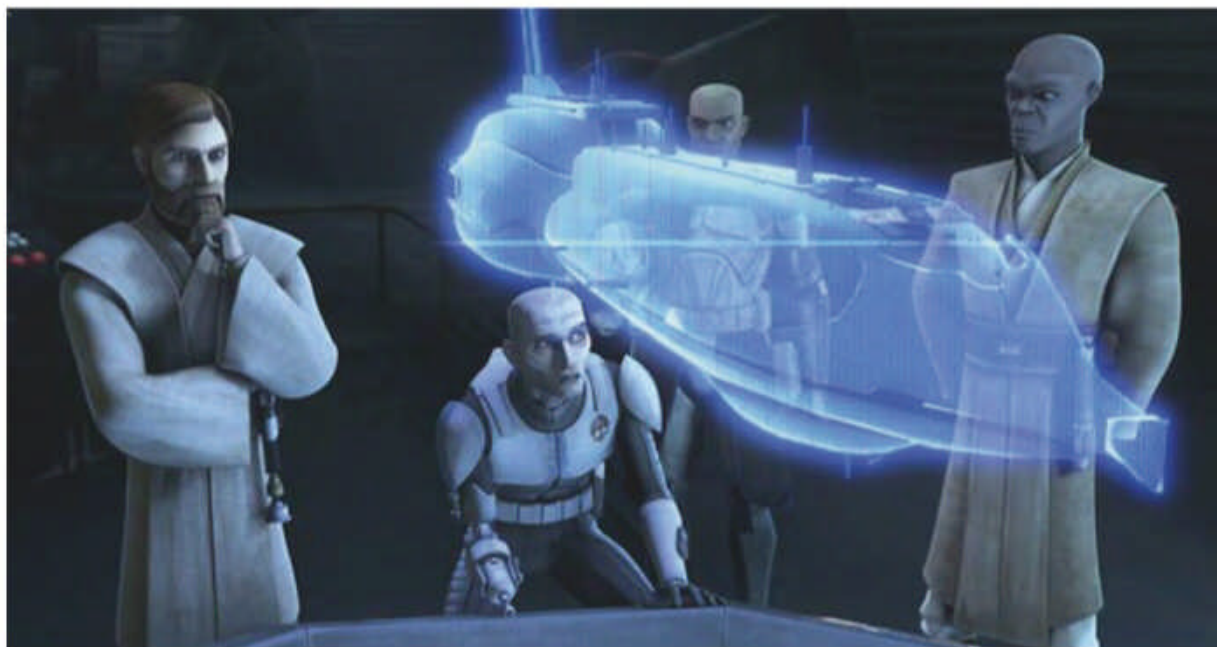
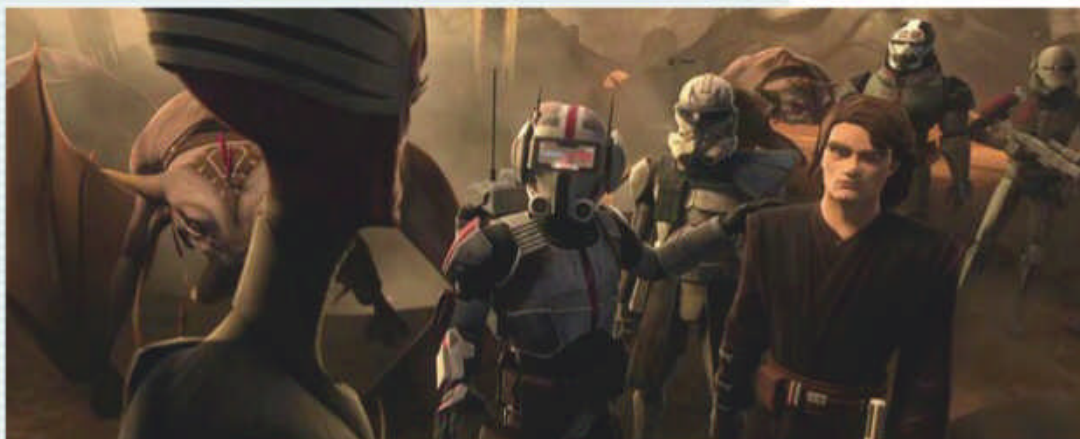
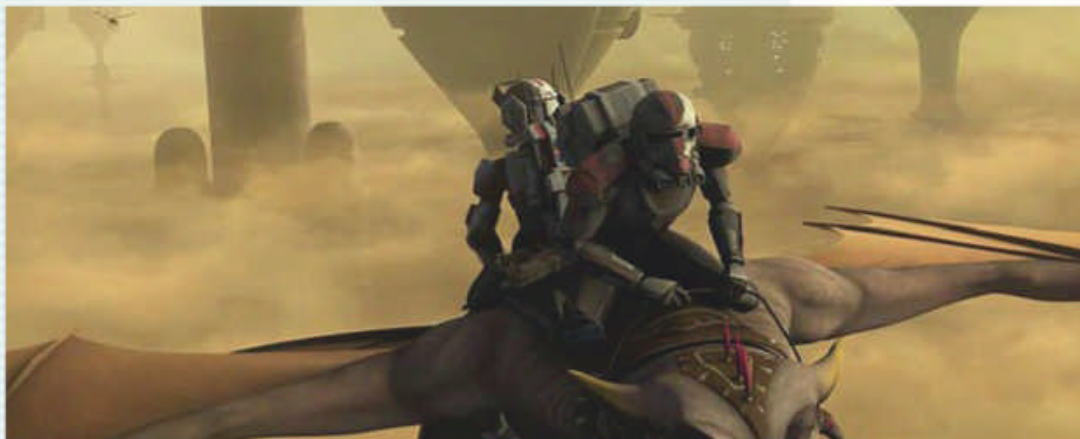


EPISODE 3 ON THE WINGS OF KEERADAKS

Written by: Brent Friedman and Matt Michnovetz / Directed by: Bosco Ng

■ Although the Separatists gained access to Echo's higher brain functions and memories, the time he spent patched into their network also gave him detailed blueprints and other intel from their databanks. Using what he knows, the newly rescued clone is able to help his friends escape as Wat Tambor and more battle droids close in on their location. Stranded outside on a narrow pipe, with droid forces closing in on both sides, Tech is able to broadcast the distress call of the native Poletec's flying creatures, the keeradaks, and the beasts swoop in to help.

The rescue brings the Poletec chief's fears to fruition, as the Separatists attack the village to recover their valuable experiment, but Anakin and the clones join forces with the natives to send the battle droids into retreat.



EPISODE 4 UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Written by: Brent Friedman and Matt Michnovetz / Directed by: Brian Kalin O'Connell

■ Back on Fort Anaxes, Echo helps the Jedi masters Mace Windu and Obi-Wan Kenobi come up with a plan to retake the assembly complex now that Admiral Trench can no longer predict their every move. In a daring infiltration of Trench's dreadnought, Echo returns behind enemy lines to plug into the Separatist communication network. By intercepting a request, Echo is able to ensure Trench commands all available battle droids to the assembly complex where the Jedi and a small number of clones are holding down a defense. Then, with a single feedback pulse, Echo brings down every battle droid in sight!

Unfortunately for the Republic, Admiral Trench, ever the cunning tactician, has a backup plan: a bomb. Echo is able to access most of the deactivation code, which Mace Windu inputs through a ray shield using the Force, but when Echo is silenced by a jamming signal, it's up to Anakin to finish the job and convince Trench to give him the final number through aggressive negotiation tactics.

A R C II : AHSOKA'S RETURN

The last time fans saw Ahsoka Tano in *The Clone Wars*, she was walking away from the Jedi Order and everything she knew. To reintroduce the character, episode director Saul Ruiz said it was important to keep that fresh betrayal in mind. "She begins her journey still a little wounded and feeling abandoned. She hasn't really been on her own before, and she doesn't really know if she fits in anywhere after leaving the Jedi Order," he said. And the sisters she meets on Level 1313 give the former Jedi a crash course in how the average citizens have experienced the war, and how they see the Jedi. "I wanted to show that in many ways the Jedi are out of touch with people," Filoni said. "They don't even realize that most of what they're doing isn't helping the average person."



EPISODE 5 GONE WITH A TRACE

Written by: Dave Filoni and Charles Murray

Directed by: Saul Ruiz and Kyle Dunlevy

■ Out on her own after walking away from the Jedi Order, Ahsoka Tano finds herself crash-landing on a platform far below Coruscant's surface. There she meets Trace Martez, a mechanic who offers to help fix her wrecked speeder bike, and gives her a fresh perspective on how the Jedi and the war are perceived by people like her and her sister, Rafa. Unlike the innocent Trace, Ahsoka soon discovers Rafa is involved in the seedy underworld and owes some thugs a debt, which she plans to pay off by repairing some load lifter droids that wreak havoc on Level 1313.



EPISODE 6 DEAL NO DEAL

Written by: Dave Filoni and Charles Murray

Directed by: Nathaniel Villanueva and Steward Lee

■ Aboard the Martez sisters' ship, the *Silver Angel*, Ahsoka joins her new friends on a mysterious mission to Kessel. Rafa claims they've been hired to pick up medicine, but Ahsoka is all-too-aware of the illegal dealings that take place on the notorious spice-mining world. The shipment of spice soon takes them to Oba Diah to meet with the leader of the Pyke Syndicate. Fearing that they're in over their heads and that crime boss Marg Krim will take her ship, Trace makes the rash decision to jettison the spice while traveling through hyperspace. Upon arrival, Ahsoka uses a Jedi mind trick to convince the gangsters that they don't need to inspect the cargo, paying the spice runners for empty crates and allowing them to fly off. But when the ruse is discovered, the Pykes lock onto the *Silver Angel* with a tractor beam and pull them back in.



REVENGE OF THE SITH

Watching the final story arc in *Star Wars: The Clone Wars* casts *Star Wars: Revenge of the Sith* in an entirely new light. During Ahsoka's side quest, Maul's capture becomes even more vital for the Jedi to unravel the Sith plot after Anakin kills Dooku. But between Obi-Wan confiding in Ahsoka about his worries over her former master, Maul's obsession over Skywalker, and the ripple through the Force that flattens Ahsoka as Anakin turns, we begin to see the events of the film with even more nuance than before. And, of course, watching Ahsoka and Rex go through Order 66 is heart-wrenching, especially in the context of similar betrayals taking hold of the galaxy at large.

EPISODE 7 DANGEROUS DEBT

Written by: Dave Filoni and Charles Murray

Directed by: Saul Ruiz and Bosco Ng

■ Inside a Pyke holding cell, Ahsoka begins to hint at her Jedi training, a secret she's concealed from the Martez sisters. But they're not impressed; they blame the Jedi for a chase on Coruscant that resulted in the sudden death of their parents and left them to fend for themselves. After Rafa is tortured, she and Ahsoka

make a break for it and find Trace in the midst of her own scheme; but before the trio can make it back to their ship, the Pykes catch up to the fugitives and only Ahsoka is able to evade them. Although she's no longer a Jedi, the Togruta's good heart won't allow her to leave the sisters in the lurch. She grabs a new speeder to double-back to rescue Trace and Rafa before they're executed on the docks. Her heroics are short-lived, however, as all three soon find themselves right where they started, inside the Pyke prison.

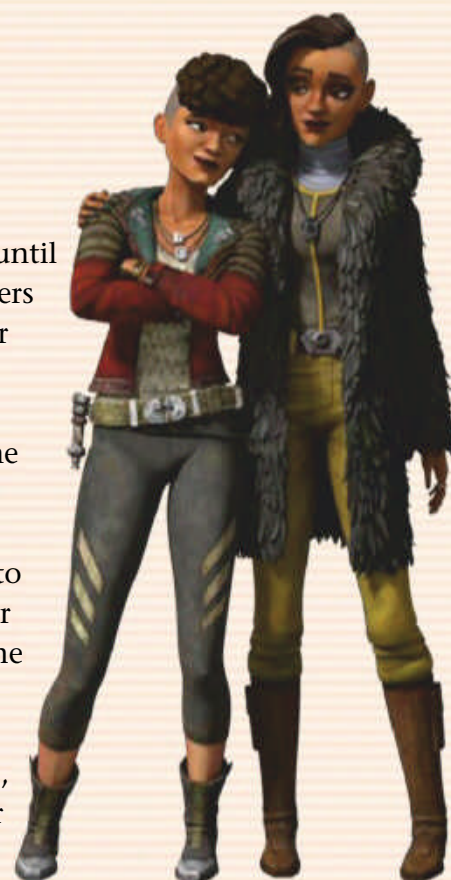


EPISODE 8 TOGETHER AGAIN

Written by: Dave Filoni and Charles Murray

Directed by: Nathaniel Villanueva

■ Using herself as bait, Ahsoka cuts a deal to let the sisters go free while she remains the Pyke's prisoner until they return with the shipment. Once the Martez sisters escape, Ahsoka uses the Force to free herself from her cell and gets to work placing explosives around the complex. When she stumbles upon a conversation between Marg Krim and Maul, she runs a trace on the communication and realizes the former Sith Lord is on Mandalore. In the meantime, the Martez sisters launch their own cunning plan to trick a refinery into giving them a new shipment of spice to exchange for Ahsoka's life. With Ahsoka's Jedi past revealed and the Pykes prepared to kill them all, the reunited friends make one final and daring escape from Oba Diah. But back on Coruscant, they're tracked by an old foe, Bo-Katan Kryze, who has come to ask Ahsoka for her help in fighting their common enemy.



A R C I I I : THE SIEGE OF MANDALORE

"I've always been interested in having the end of *The Clone Wars* series coincide with events of *Revenge of the Sith*," Filoni has said of the epic finale that reunited Ahsoka and Captain Rex just before the tragedy of Order 66. "There was a responsibility to tell the end of their story and then hand off Anakin and Obi-Wan to their proper conclusion, which was in the film." Another prequel-trilogy connection took place behind-the-scenes, as storytellers brought back the original Darth Maul, Ray Park from *Star Wars: The Phantom Menace* (1999), to perform motion-capture fight choreography for the episode "The Phantom Apprentice."

For Filoni, the final chapter is bittersweet. Throughout the series, he strove to tell stories that were filled with adventure, optimism, and hope, yet the final chapter is anything but hopeful. "I always knew the end of the show was going to be difficult, because it doesn't end on the most uplifting of notes. But it's how this part of the story has to go. It's what happens to the galaxy." The intensity and reality of executing Order 66 on the show also put Filoni in a conundrum as to how Ahsoka would handle such an obstacle, while also being mindful of the younger viewers. He was careful to ensure that Ahsoka emerged from the final battle with her convictions and her morality intact.



EPISODE 10 THE PHANTOM APPRENTICE

Written by: Dave Filoni

Directed by: Nathaniel Villanueva

■ Ensnared in his trap, Maul—who was expecting his old nemesis, Obi-Wan Kenobi—confides in Ahsoka that soon the Sith Lord Darth Sidious will control the entire galaxy. His confession makes it imperative that he be captured alive if the Republic hopes to unravel the Sith plot, as Anakin has killed the Separatist leader Count Dooku while rescuing Supreme Chancellor Palpatine. While Ahsoka tries to make sense of Maul's role and separate the facts from his deceit, Almec is assassinated. As Bo-Katan tends to the last stage of the battle embroiling the city and the Mandalorians make their last stand, the leaders of Maul's crime syndicates scurry into hiding.

Inside the throne room, Ahsoka and Maul have their final showdown, clashing sabers as Maul reveals his true plan. Believing Anakin Skywalker to be Darth Sidious' new apprentice, Maul plotted to draw Skywalker out to destroy him. In desperation, Maul asks Ahsoka to join forces before he's ultimately captured by Commander Rex, who comes to Ahsoka's rescue rather than allowing Maul to fall to his demise.



EPISODE 9 OLD FRIENDS NOT FORGOTTEN

Written by: Dave Filoni

Directed by: Saul Ruiz

■ In the wake of the Battle of Yerbana, Anakin Skywalker and Obi-Wan Kenobi return to their Jedi command ship to find a surprising message—a hologram of Ahsoka Tano and Bo-Katan Kryze. The Mandalorian doesn't have the numbers required for a full-scale siege of the city of Sundari, so she and Anakin's former student have come to beg for the Republic's military assistance. It's an awkward reunion for the estranged master and apprentice, but the clones of the 501st are excited to have Ahsoka back, even painting their helmets in a crude approximation of her

orange and white facial markings to pay their respects. And Ahsoka is reunited with her lightsabers.

But before they can agree to help Ahsoka, the Jedi are called into action to defend the capital of Coruscant. Anakin agrees to split his forces and send half, led by the newly promoted Commander Rex, with Ahsoka and Bo-Katan to Mandalore so as not to completely abandon them in their hour of need. On the ground, Bo-Katan and Ahsoka fight valiantly, backed by their reinforcements and Mandalorian loyalists, against Gar Saxon and the warriors who work for the crooked Prime Minister Almec. Deep underground, Ahsoka follows Saxon into the tunnels in pursuit of Maul, while Bo-Katan takes on Almec in the throne room.





EPISODE 11 SHATTERED

Written by: Dave Filoni

Directed by: Saul Ruiz

■ After the successful Siege of Mandalore, Ahsoka and Rex take Maul, encased in an ancient holding cell designed to restrict Force-wielders, back to Coruscant on a Republic cruiser. But the dark side of the Force is stronger than ever, puzzlingly centered around Supreme Chancellor Palpatine, and the Jedi sense a plot to destroy the Order. Once in hyperspace, Ahsoka is staggered by a disturbance in the Force and a feeling of impending doom surrounding her old master. As she rushes to find Rex, she catches the end of his briefing with a hologram of a cloaked Palpatine executing Order 66. With those three words, the ship is thrust into chaos as the loyal Republic clone troopers, like their brothers across the galaxy, turn on the Jedi. Even though Ahsoka is no longer a part

of the Jedi Order, her friend turns his blasters on her, and gives the order for his men to find Maul and end his life as well.

After freeing Maul to serve as a diversion, Ahsoka enlists three loyal astromechs who help her to make sense of something Rex was muttering about the fallen clone trooper known as Fives. In a password-protected file, Ahsoka learns of an earlier inhibitor chip malfunction that led to the clone trooper Tup executing his Jedi general, and an account from Rex who watched his friend Fives die after he uncovered the truth. Intent on helping her comrade avoid the same fate, Ahsoka and the droids stun Rex and take him to a medical bay where she uses the Force to help locate the inhibitor chip and remove it from his brain.

As the other brainwashed clones close in, blasters firing, Rex awakens and ends the firefight in Ahsoka's defense.

EPISODE 12 VICTORY AND DEATH

Written by: Dave Filoni

Directed by: Nathaniel Villanueva

■ With Rex on her side, Ahsoka and her friend try to find a means of escaping the cruiser, now crawling with clones intent on killing every last Force-wielder. Meanwhile, Maul stalks in the shadows, killing everyone in his path and crippling the hyperdrive generators, which sends the craft plummeting toward a nearby moon. True to the teachings of the Jedi, Ahsoka has no intention of killing the clone troopers who have turned their blasters on her, instead hoping to escape on a smaller craft before the cruiser crashes. To get into the hangar, Rex leads Ahsoka into the mass of soldiers claiming to have captured Tano, but arguing that she's no longer a Jedi so the order doesn't apply to her. During the ruse, Maul successfully steals the ship Ahsoka had planned to commandeer for herself and she and Rex are forced to formulate a new plan.

In a daring escape, Rex hops into the cockpit of a Y-wing bomber and Ahsoka uses her Force skills to navigate her descent through the atmosphere and a sea of fiery wreckage, and finally into the gunner seat of the small craft, before the cruiser crashes to the surface. In the aftermath of these horrifying events, Ahsoka and Rex mourn the fallen clones, burying their dead. Ahsoka leaves behind a single lightsaber hilt, a relic that will be discovered sometime in the future by the Emperor's new enforcer, Darth Vader. 🗡️



IRA KEELER: MAKING SPACE

Former Industrial Light & Magic modelmaker Ira Keeler looks back on his 20-year career at the groundbreaking effects company.

WORDS: MICHAEL KOGGE
WITH THANKS TO PETER ORR



he speeder bikes and scout trooper costumes in *Star Wars: Return of the Jedi* (1983); the destroyer

droids in *Star Wars: The Phantom Menace* (1999); the DeLorean time travel machine in *Back to the Future* (1985); the German zeppelin *Luxembourg* in *The Rocketeer* (1991)—these are but a few of the iconic models, props, and costumes that Ira Keeler had a hand in making for some of the biggest blockbusters of all time.

Despite his historic contributions to film, this humble modelmaker from Vacaville, California never dreamed of working in the movies. Ira Keeler considered himself just another hobbyist who loved to build miniature airplanes and rockets in his spare time. But his craftsmanship eventually led him to 20-year career at Industrial Light & Magic (ILM).

Born in 1940 to a homemaker mother and a machinist father, Ira Keeler was one of seven children. He grew up in the little mining community of La Grange, California, just east of George Lucas' hometown of Modesto. To amuse ▶



01

LUCASFILM LTD.
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED
© 1995

01 Ira Keeler (pictured bottom right) made the helmet and body parts for the biker scout costume, based on concept art by Nilo Rodis-Jamero.

PETE -

BIKER HELMET
VARIATIONS.

NBL.

10.8.81



P-

TRY COMPOUND LENS

NBL 11.8.1



► himself and his large family, he found a way to make his own toys. "Up in the attic, I found an old model airplane kit that my brother must have been working on. It had some leftover pieces in it," Keeler says. "I got that out and started playing with it and a razor blade. I made little model planes with little tiny wings. From there, I just made all sorts of toys and things, carving model cars out of wood."

Life wasn't just making models in the attic, however. On Friday and Saturday nights in the late 1950s, Keeler would drive to Modesto for "Draggin' Tenth." This was teen slang at the time for the cruising and drag-racing that happened on Modesto's Tenth Street, which George Lucas memorialized in his film *American Graffiti* (1973). "It was just cars from all around," Keeler recalls, "just like in the movie."

After a stint in the Air Force after high school, Keeler worked in both the civil service and at the Boeing plant in Everett, Washington where he helped build the first 747 airplanes. In the 1970s, Keeler returned to Northern California

and found employment in the nascent cable television business, while pursuing modelmaking on the side. It was then that he made a connection that would change his life.

Chocks Away

When Mike Fulmer, a designer of custom autos and a professional modelmaker for aviation firms and museums, read a magazine article profiling Keeler's specially made propellers for flying model airplanes, "He contacted me and sent me a sketch for a little propeller. I made it for him and he was impressed." Keller says. So impressed that Fulmer travelled to Vacaville to meet Keeler in person, and the two formed an immediate friendship based on respect for each other's talents. From then on Keeler assisted Fulmer on his projects.

"I did a lot of pattern work for him. He was making scale model airplanes. Beautiful work," Keeler says. "One of the best modelmakers in the world. And then he was hired by ILM to work on *Star Wars: The Empire Strikes Back* (1980)."

"I MADE LITTLE MODEL PLANES WITH LITTLE TINY WINGS. FROM THERE, I JUST MADE ALL SORTS OF TOYS AND THINGS, CARVING MODEL CARS OUT OF WOOD."



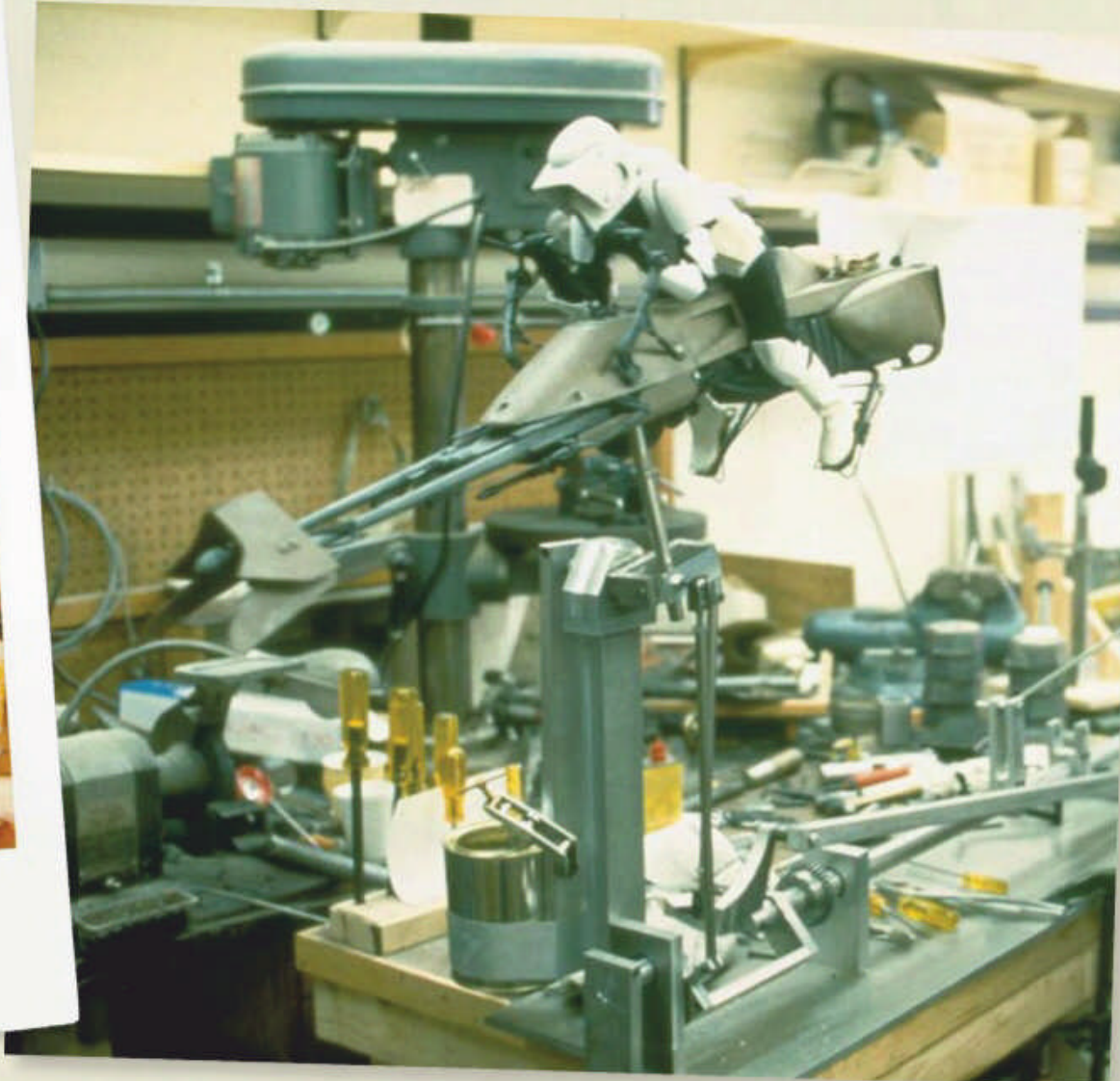
02

Movies had never held much interest to Keeler. "I hadn't even seen the first *Star Wars*, to tell you the truth, I was just involved in model airplanes and flying combat models." But Fulmer's job sounded so amazing that Keeler was keen to join his friend and turn his hobby into a career. Fulmer recommended Keeler to his bosses and Keeler began to take on freelance work, including building parts for the Pan American seaplane that transports Indiana Jones off on his adventures in *Raiders of the Lost Ark* (1981). Eventually those engagements led to full-time employment at ILM and Keeler joined the company in 1981. "George Lucas had to get going on *Return of the Jedi*, and ILM was totally jammed with *E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial* (1982) and *Poltergeist* (1982)," says Keeler. "I went in to meet Pete Ronzoni and Dick David, and they were blown away by my work. They couldn't believe it—and they taught pattern making and vacuum forming down at San Jose State as professors!"

The Daily Commute

At first, Keeler worked out of his home shop in Vacaville until ILM made room in their San Rafael studio space. The commute from

03



Vacaville to San Rafael and back was around 100 miles, but Keeler didn't mind because he loved the work. "We ended up with a little shop in Phil Tippett's area," he recalls of his first months at ILM. "Our job was to create the biker scout, and that's where I started making parts for the patterns for vacuum forming. I did the helmet and a lot of the body parts, and the gun and holster."

Keeler relied on concept artist Nilo Rodis-Jamero's concept sketches for the biker scout, also known as the Imperial scout trooper. The helmet was cast out of ABS plastic so it could be lightweight. Keeler devised the detailing for the helmet, such as the breathing filter. "That was

made from a piece of plastic from a model kit, a motorcycle head fin, and the nozzle of a kitchen faucet. We made a mold and cast copies out of urethane, which were glued into the opening in the nose."

Keeler worked through the winter of 1981-82 on the biker scout costume and props, then moved over to the model shop to build the speeder bike miniatures with Mike Fulmer and Mike Cochrane. Though life-sized speeder bike props were used for filming much of the highspeed chase through the forests of Endor's moon, ILM needed smaller-scale models for the shots where the riders made abrupt banking turns or moves. With no blueprints



MODELLING MALAKILI

Keeler's two decade tenure at ILM didn't just involve making models—at times he was called on to be a model himself. For *Return of the Jedi*, the costume makers based in the U.S. needed someone who could try on the costume for the rancor keeper (later christened Malakili), and Keeler fit both the bill and the grubby garments.

"I wasn't in the movie, they just wanted someone to put it on so they could take a picture," Keeler remembers. "They shipped the photo over to England, so the costume department over there could see how it was supposed to look when they put in on the actor."

02 Time out for Keeler at ILM.

03 Ira Keeler at work in the ILM model shop.

04 The speeder bike models were scaled down from the full-size prop.

05 Keeler detailed the miniature figures for the speeder bike models.

available, the modelmakers crafted scaled down miniatures using measurements from one of the full-sized props. Keeler also detailed the Luke, Leia, and scout trooper puppets that rode the bikes, referring to his patterns for the biker-scout costume as a guide to create the parts at 1/12th scale. These 30-inch long models with accompanying riders remain some of Keeler's favorite endeavors on the *Star Wars* movies.

After working on the speeder bikes and the scale figures, Ira was assigned to build one of the desert skiffs, and then assist on Jabba's sail barge. For the scene in *Return of the Jedi* where the vessel explodes, ILM decided to shoot a model of the barge on the roof of the main studio in San Rafael, in lieu of going to the

DUCKING FOR COVER

Eagle-eyed guests who enjoyed the original *Star Tours* attraction might remember a mustached man in the spaceport control room who dives for cover at the very end of the ride. That man was none other than Ira Keeler, and his starring role was a case of being in the right place at the right time.

ILM had been working on the effects for the attraction for a year when Keeler and *Star Tours* director Dennis Muren traveled to Southern California to survey the work of Disney's Imagineers at W.E.D., the Walter E. Disney Studios where many famous Disney attractions were brought to life.

"We went down to get the scoop on the *StarSpeeder 3000*," says Keeler, who wasn't expecting to end up on camera. "At some point they said, 'Ira, we've got a deal for you,' and they took Dennis and me over to an area where they'd fixed up this little booth with some stuff on the wall. It looked like a control room."

This was a set that would eventually be composited into the very sequence that the ILMers were working on. "They gave me a clipboard and a headset, and I wore this shirt with a tag that said 'Bob' on it," Keeler laughs. "So, I got in there, and went through the routine of diving under the table, and that's what they used!"

► Yuma desert in Arizona. The crew poured sand across the roof and the barge sat on solenoids that were set with pyrotechnics. When the pyrotechnics exploded, the barge would drop and appear to lose its ability to hover. To capture the moment, the crew used an ultra high-speed camera designed for the military. "It sounded like a turbine. It just rang," Keeler remembers.

In addition to the models, Keeler helped make the Ewok weapons that Rodis-Jamero had sketched, working on spears, arrows, bows, clubs, sticks, and even the rocks that the Ewoks tossed at stormtroopers. Broomsticks and ABS plastic pipe served as the base materials for the spears and clubs, while the bows and arrows were crafted from dowels and cedar arrow blanks. Silicone rubber replaced sharp stone and wood to make the arrowheads, boulders, and slingstones. Keeler also added rubber to the Mandalorian helmet and armor worn by the stuntman for the scene in which Boba Fett tumbled off the skiff, to cushion any impacts.

Gone Surfing

The Mon Calamari star cruiser—or what Keeler and his colleagues referred to as, "the pickle ship," because of its resemblance to a brined cucumber—was among the most challenging miniatures built for *Return of the Jedi*. But although the climatic space battle features a number of Mon Calamari cruisers,



06 The Ewoks were armed with weapons and rocks made by Keeler and the ILM model makers.

07 Jabba's sail barge met a fiery end on the roof of ILM in San Rafael.

the modelmakers only built two. One had fin-like wings and the other was larger and rounder. The modelmakers merely redressed and repainted these two cruisers into different versions to bulk up the rebel fleet.

The modelmakers based their creation on a 16-inch maquette, sculpted by Lorne Peterson. "I started out with three big blocks of basswood," Keeler recalls. "Those were split from bottom to top, and then shaped. Then I made these little bumps from pieces of battered wood, which were long with round points on the end. I made those in all different shapes and sizes, vacuum formed them, and started to add them onto the ship. When that was all set up as a pattern, a mold was made and then the miniature was cast out of fiberglass so it would be clear. I drilled little holes in the paint for the windows, so the light from a neon bulb inside would show through. By the time we were done, the model was eight feet long, so I had to sit it on two garbage cans to work on it. It was a big, big job."

At one point, executive producer George Lucas visited the model shop to see how the cruiser was progressing. "I had a piece of wood laid out to cut it down and shape it, and George said, 'Are you making a surfboard?'" Keeler laughs at the memory. "Yeah, pretty much yeah, I was!"





08

“I HAD A PIECE OF WOOD LAID OUT TO CUT IT DOWN AND SHAPE IT, AND GEORGE SAID, ‘ARE YOU MAKING A SURFBOARD?’”

Lucas returned when Keeler was busy adding the bumpy “pickle warts” he’d crafted to the exterior of the cruiser—the type of detailing that ILM modelmakers called “greebles.” Lucas brought with him concept artist Joe Johnston, who had designed the cruiser, and modelshop supervisor Peterson. “George was moving some of the greebles around, placing them where he thought they might go. And then Joe came over and he moved them around, saying where he’d like them. And then Lorne said he’d like to see some of them go over here and over there... ‘Oh, brother,’ I thought, ‘What am I gonna do?!’ In the end, I just decided I was going to put them wherever I could figure out,” Keeler chuckles.

Trusted Techniques

During decade-and-a-half between *Jedi* and *The Phantom Menace*, ILM deployed Keeler’s modelmaking skills on other special effects extravaganzas like the *Indiana Jones* sequels, *Back*

to the Future, and *Jurassic Park* (1993). This period witnessed the rise of computer-generated effects, which became ILM’s bread and butter. Despite advances in digital techniques, modelmaking remained, “pretty much the same thing,” according to Keeler. When he began working on the N-1 Naboo starfighter model for *The Phantom Menace*, Keeler had to create a wooden master of the ship from drawings, using the same methods he’d employed more than a decade earlier for *Jedi*. The same was true for the podracer models, the droid starfighter, and the full-size, six-foot tall destroyer droid he helped to construct.

“Many viewers thought the destroyer droid was completely computer generated, but that wasn’t the case,” he says. “Any shot where the droid wasn’t moving in the film, it would be our model. They used it as a stand-in for when the background was still.”

Keeler, who also worked on the walkways for the Kamino



09

08 Keller (left) and his ILM colleagues add detail to a Mon Calamari cruiser.

09 “The Pickle ship” being moved into position for an effects shot.

city set on *Star Wars: Attack of the Clones* (2002), decided it was time to stop making the daily 100-mile commute from Vacaville that same year, and retired from ILM. The company rewarded him for his long service with a golden C-3PO statuette. The modelmaker has nothing but fond memories of his time with the company, and marvels at his experiences at ILM.

“I just happened to fall into it,” Keeler reflects. “What a place, what a place. It was a wonderful group of people. A magical place to be.”

And how does he fill his spare time since his retirement? He makes model rockets. 🚀

SOULE MAN

A close-up portrait of Charles Soule, a man with short brown hair and a slight smile, wearing a dark blue blazer over a white button-down shirt. The background is a solid dark grey.

FORMER LEGAL EAGLE TURNED AUTHOR CHARLES SOULE IS WELL VERSED IN WRITING *STAR WARS* ADVENTURES, ACROSS ALL ERAS OF ITS RICH HISTORY. NOW, WITH HIS NEW *STAR WARS* NOVEL, *LIGHT OF THE JEDI*, HE INTRODUCES READERS TO THE GLORY DAYS OF *THE HIGH REPUBLIC*.

STAR WARS INSIDER RECENTLY SPOKE WITH SOULE ABOUT HIS WRITING CAREER, HIS *STAR WARS* COMICS, AND WHAT LIES AHEAD FOR THE CHARACTERS OF THIS NEW AGE OF *STAR WARS* STORYTELLING.

WORDS: AMY RICHAU

F

ew writers have told stories about as many iconic *Star Wars* characters, in as many different

time periods, as Charles Soule. Over the last five years Soule has written dozens of *Star Wars* stories, including six Marvel Comics series, spanning the entire *Star Wars* timeline. *Obi-Wan and Anakin* focused on the Jedi and his Padawan after the events of *Star Wars: The Phantom Menace* (1999), *Darth Vader: Dark Lord of the Sith* began its story immediately after *Star Wars: Revenge of the Sith* (2005), and *Poe Dameron* followed the adventures of the eponymous hero from shortly before *Star Wars: The Force Awakens* (2015) to just after the events of *Star Wars: The Last Jedi* (2017). Other comic series have featured Lando Calrissian, Ben Solo, and most recently Luke and Leia's escapades post-*Star Wars: The Empire Strikes Back* (1980).

Soule's new novel, *Light of the Jedi*, kicked off a publishing event centered around a new *Star Wars* era called the High Republic, centuries prior to *The Phantom Menace*.

Soule's *Star Wars* journey began while he was practicing law—first at a large firm in Manhattan doing corporate law, and later focusing on immigration law at his own practice. The transition from lawyer to writer didn't happen overnight. "I found my work very rewarding, and things were going well, but I always knew I wanted a life based in creativity," explains Soule. "So, on the side, in my tiny bits of spare time, I wrote. First, a novel (which remains unpublished, maybe for the best) and then comics. I started to get traction in comics after four or five years of learning the craft and the business, and around four years later I started writing *Swamp Thing* for DC Comics—that was my first big gig in comics, and it



01

led somewhat rapidly to work at Marvel, where I signed an exclusive contract for four more years. During that time, I put out some creator-owned comics featuring my own characters, and two novels, *The Oracle Year* and *Anyone*. I closed my law practice a few years into the Marvel exclusive, when it became clear that I couldn't really do both at the same time to the level each career deserved. And somewhere in there, *Star Wars* came calling."

Not Such A Long Time Ago....

When Marvel re-launched *Star Wars* comics in 2015 with the flagship *Star Wars* title, *Darth Vader*, Soule reached out to Marvel editor Jordan White to let him know he was interested in writing a new *Star Wars* story. "I pitched for two characters: Palpatine and Lando.

It could have gone either way, but I ended up writing for Lando, and I'm glad I did. I love that book, and it led to so much more."

In addition to the five-issue *Lando* mini-series, Soule wrote a Lando-centric story for the *Star Wars: A New Hope* (1977) anthology *From a Certain Point of View*, called "The Angle." The cape-loving smooth-talker appealed to Soule for a variety of reasons, and he sees the potential for many more Lando stories somewhere along the road.

"Lando jumped off the screen in *Empire*—he was larger than life from the first moment we saw him, the archetype of

many charmers-with-a-heart-of-tin to come," says Soule. "I love taking characters that are portrayed one way in, say, a film, and then spinning them out into new

"I PITCHED FOR TWO CHARACTERS: PALPATINE AND LANDO. IT COULD HAVE GONE EITHER WAY, BUT I ENDED UP WRITING FOR LANDO, AND I'M GLAD I DID. I LOVE THAT BOOK, AND IT LED TO SO MUCH MORE."

► directions. I thought Lando was ripe for something like that. It could be interesting to explore what he did between *Star Wars: Return of the Jedi* (1983) and *The Force Awakens*. We haven't seen much of Lando in that era besides his part in *Battlefront II* and Daniel José Older's novel, *Last Shot*."

Lando is also a part of one of Soule's most recent projects, the relaunch of the *Star Wars* main comic. It's fitting Soule is telling stories that take place between the events of *The Empire Strikes Back* and *Return of the Jedi*, as that era of *Star Wars* films is the one he feels the strongest connection with.

"I was devoted to the prequels when they hit and was anticipating the sequels as much as anyone, but I was an original-trilogy kid," he says. "Those were my gateway. I spent years obsessing about what would happen in the next film, and they didn't disappoint Young

01 (Previous page) The cover art for *Light of the Jedi*.

02 *Lando* #5 cover art by Alex Maleev.

03 Variant cover art for *Lando* #1 by Mike Mayhew.

04 Issue #1 cover for *The Rise of Kylo Ren*. Art by Clayton Crain.

05 Issue #1 cover for *Star Wars* (2020) by R.B. Silva.

Charles. Adult Charles is pretty fond of them as well."

Calling Back

Anyone who reads more than one of Soule's *Star Wars* comics will sooner or later discover a familiar object or character from another one of his stories. Momin's mask in the *Lando* series played a large part in *Darth Vader*; the character Verla first appeared in *Darth Vader* and recently popped up in the *Star Wars* comic. These connections, as you might expect, are very intentional.

"I don't always have a grand plan, but I definitely love callbacks, and do them whenever I can," says Soule. "It's part of the fun of working in a multi-era-shared galaxy. I've done others, too—Papa Toren first appears in *Lando*, and then again in my *Poe Dameron* series, and there are more. It's fun using stuff I create because there aren't as many strings attached. I can do things with Verla, perhaps, that would be impossible with

FORCES OF EVIL

Soule had the chance to take a deeper look at the psyches and motivations of Darth Vader and Kylo Ren, two iconic characters who fell to the dark side, in his Marvel Comics series' *Darth Vader* and *The Rise of Kylo Ren*. Both projects had their unique challenges.

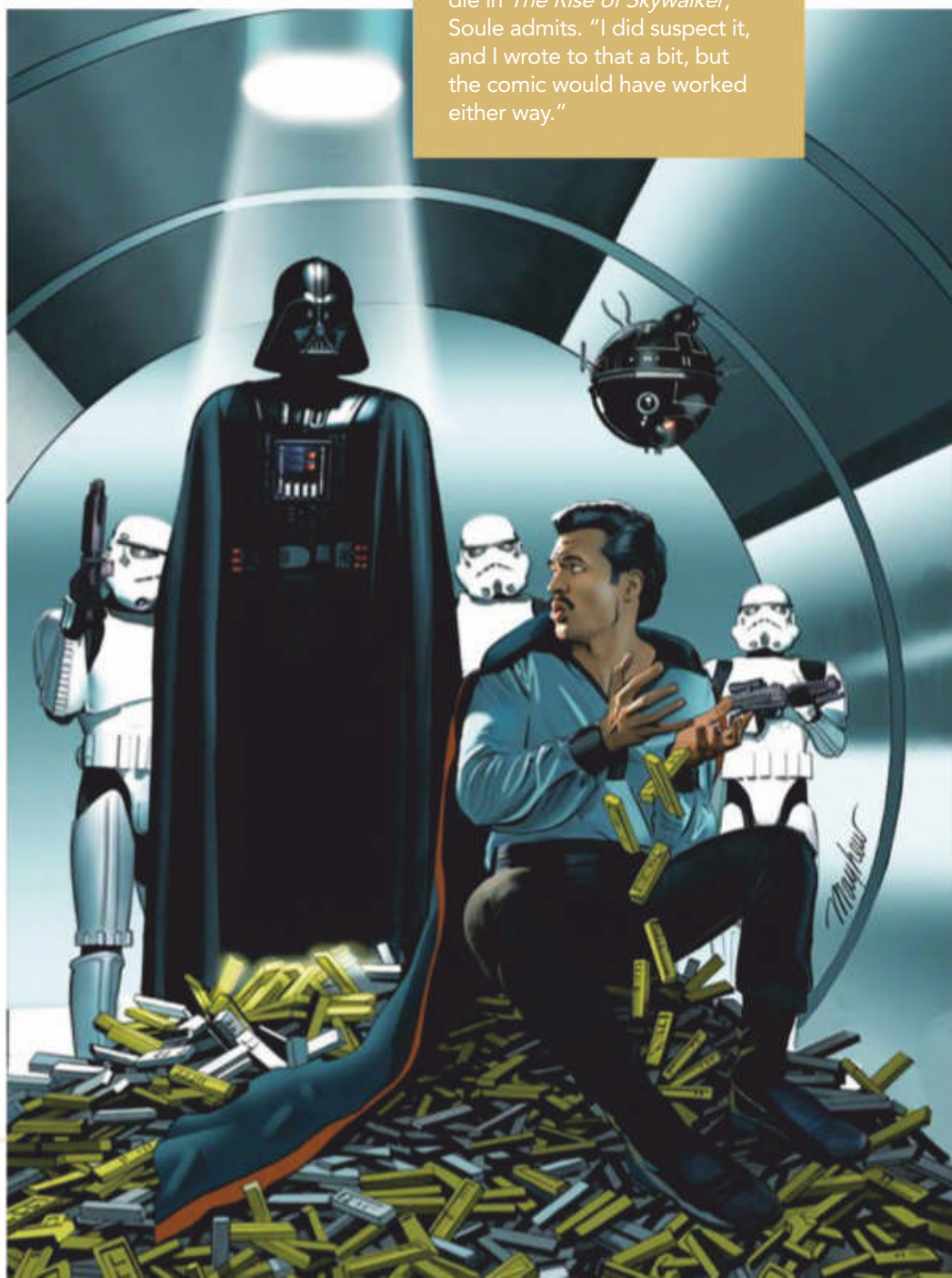
"They kind of work on a different scale," explains Soule. "We knew a lot about Vader when I wrote the series, and not all that much about Kylo. So, I could use things we knew about Vader to boost the impact of certain scenes, but it also meant there were more guardrails around some of the storytelling. For Kylo, I had a lot of room to move and invent."

Soule described his work on *Vader* as, "fitting pieces into a jigsaw puzzle that already had a lot of its pieces in place." There were less puzzle pieces in play when it came to writing a comic series about the young Ben Solo. "I think I'd say *Rise of Kylo Ren* was more challenging, because when I started writing I didn't know Ben Solo would die in *The Rise of Skywalker*," Soule admits. "I did suspect it, and I wrote to that a bit, but the comic would have worked either way."

02



03



someone like Ahsoka. (Verla, by the way, I did always have a plan for, and it's what we see in the comic; I just wasn't sure if I'd ever get a chance to do it.)"

Speaking of grand plans, *Insider* asked Soule if he'd had concrete outlines for different story arcs, or indeed the endings, of his long-running comic series' *Poe Dameron* and *Darth Vader*, before he started writing them.

"When I get a job on a long-running title, like *Poe*, *Vader* or the current *Star Wars* series, I always provide an outline to Lucasfilm and Marvel, explaining what I think will happen, the characters I'll use, and so on," Soule reveals. "They're usually set up for 25 issues, and if I get to go longer, I just add to the outline. They're detailed but not too detailed, and often things change during the writing, as I respond to one character or another, or just have ideas that hadn't occurred to me when I wrote the outline. That said, I generally do have a plan in most cases for what will happen. It's like a house that's mostly built, but there is always room in the plans for adjustments, some additions, and decorations."

A Longer Time Ago....

Soule is now one of five writers behind the ambitious publishing program initially dubbed *Project Luminous*, set in an era 200 years prior to *The Phantom Menace*. Soule's involvement began with a call from Lucasfilm's Creative Director of Publishing, Michael Siglain.

"Mike reached out to see if I might be interested in participating in a project he'd envisioned—an epic, multi-year, multi-publisher story," Soule recalls. "He wanted five writers to help build out the universe, to find the best new story we could tell, and he wanted me to be one of them. Easiest yes ever—and that was so early we weren't even

"HE WANTED FIVE WRITERS TO HELP BUILD OUT THE UNIVERSE, TO FIND THE BEST NEW STORY WE COULD TELL, AND HE WANTED ME TO BE ONE OF THEM"

calling it *Project Luminous* yet. The other writers, of course, are Justina Ireland, Claudia Gray, Daniel José Older, and Cavan Scott, and together with some amazing, dedicated people at Lucasfilm, we've built a new era known as the High Republic."

It's common for a *Star Wars* author to check in with another writer working on a project in a similar timeline, but *The High Republic* has taken that sense of a collaborative group effort to a new level. Multiple meetings at Skywalker Ranch helped drive the project's ambitious narrative.

"The five writers, along with Lucasfilm editors and many members of Story Group, met a number of times to figure out the story we were going to tell," says Soule. "It was fascinating to see so many different points of view on what *Star Wars* is, and what makes it work, and how we might present those ideas in new ways for the fandom. A lot of incredible ideas came out of those rooms, and not all of them ended up in *The High*

Republic. I have a feeling you'll see some of those, one of these days."

The High Republic begins with Soule's novel, *Light of the Jedi*, centered around a catastrophe in hyperspace. "I was just really fortunate," says Soule. "I'd come off some very high-profile, challenging *Star Wars* gigs that had done well (*Vader* and *The Rise of Kylo Ren*, in particular), and I think that helped in terms of giving Lucasfilm the confidence that I could introduce *The High Republic* to the world. I love writing novels, and I had a clear vision for what I thought *Light of the Jedi* could be. This can be a challenging, complex job, but it's been very rewarding to create all these new ideas. I'm very proud of the book."

Populating An Era

Predating established *Star Wars* history by two centuries meant that *The High Republic* writers were charged with creating an entirely new set of characters to populate the galaxy. Soule relished the opportunity to cast Jedi Master Avar Kriss as the central player in *Light of the Jedi*. "She is unique, and has a very interesting way of looking at the Force—she 'hears' it as much



04



05

► as feels it,” Soule says. “The Force is music to her, and that allows her to do some very cool things. Avar is part of a huge cast in *Light of the Jedi*, and while she’s the first Jedi we meet, there are many more, of all descriptions. The *Star Wars* galaxy is huge. There’s room for everyone,” he adds.

Soule is also enthusiastic about other new characters we’ll soon meet. “Loden Greatstorm and Bell Zettifar are a fantastic master-Padawan duo,” he tells us. “Porter Engle is a great old grizzled warrior.

LESS THAN DIVINE INTERVENTION

Many different things can be true from a certain point of view in *Star Wars* stories—and that’s just how Charles Soule likes it. Hearing various fan interpretations, even ones he never intended, “is one of my favorite parts of the job,” says Soule. “It’s the sort of thing that I used to do when I was a kid wondering about Luke or Vader or Obi-Wan. In fact, I often lean away from direct explanations. I think it’s much more fun for the fans (and me) to let them piece together their own theories.”

Joss and Pikka Adren are a really fun married couple. The San Tekkas; Marchion Ro; the Tempest Runners... Honestly, I like them all, for different reasons.”

While some of these names are as yet unfamiliar to readers, Soule promises we’ll run into old friends on our High Republic journey, including Jedi Master Yoda. “*The High Republic* is set centuries before *The Phantom Menace*, but we know that *Star Wars* has a number of long-lived characters and species, beyond Yoda,” Soule intimates. “We’ve known from the beginning that there are opportunities for some familiar faces to pop up, and we’ve taken advantage of that here and there, just for fun.”

The nature of the Force and the choices made by those who use it have often played an important part in Soule’s *Star Wars* storytelling, and *The High Republic* will be no different, although its creators have striven to explore such themes in new ways. “Every character has their own struggles,” Soule says of the characters of the era, “otherwise

06



they wouldn’t be interesting. But we are absolutely trying to tread new ground here with the characters and their arcs. I think many, if not all Jedi probably struggle to understand the two sides of the Force and their relationship with them. After all, that was a central part of Luke’s training on Dagobah, and even Rey’s training on Ahch-To. There are many ways to depict that sort of thing.”

But what of the villains of the piece? Having written extensively about tormented bad guys like Darth Vader, was it fun to write about the Nihil, the anarchistic marauders of *The High Republic* who appear to be bad simply because they can be?

“Oh yeah. They’re a blast,” laughs Soule. “They’re not some buttoned-down group with planet-killing superweapons. They’re smaller than the Empire, and they fight amongst themselves, but that doesn’t mean they’re not a massive threat. The Nihil fight in ways we haven’t seen before in *Star Wars*, and they’re very dangerous.” 🙌

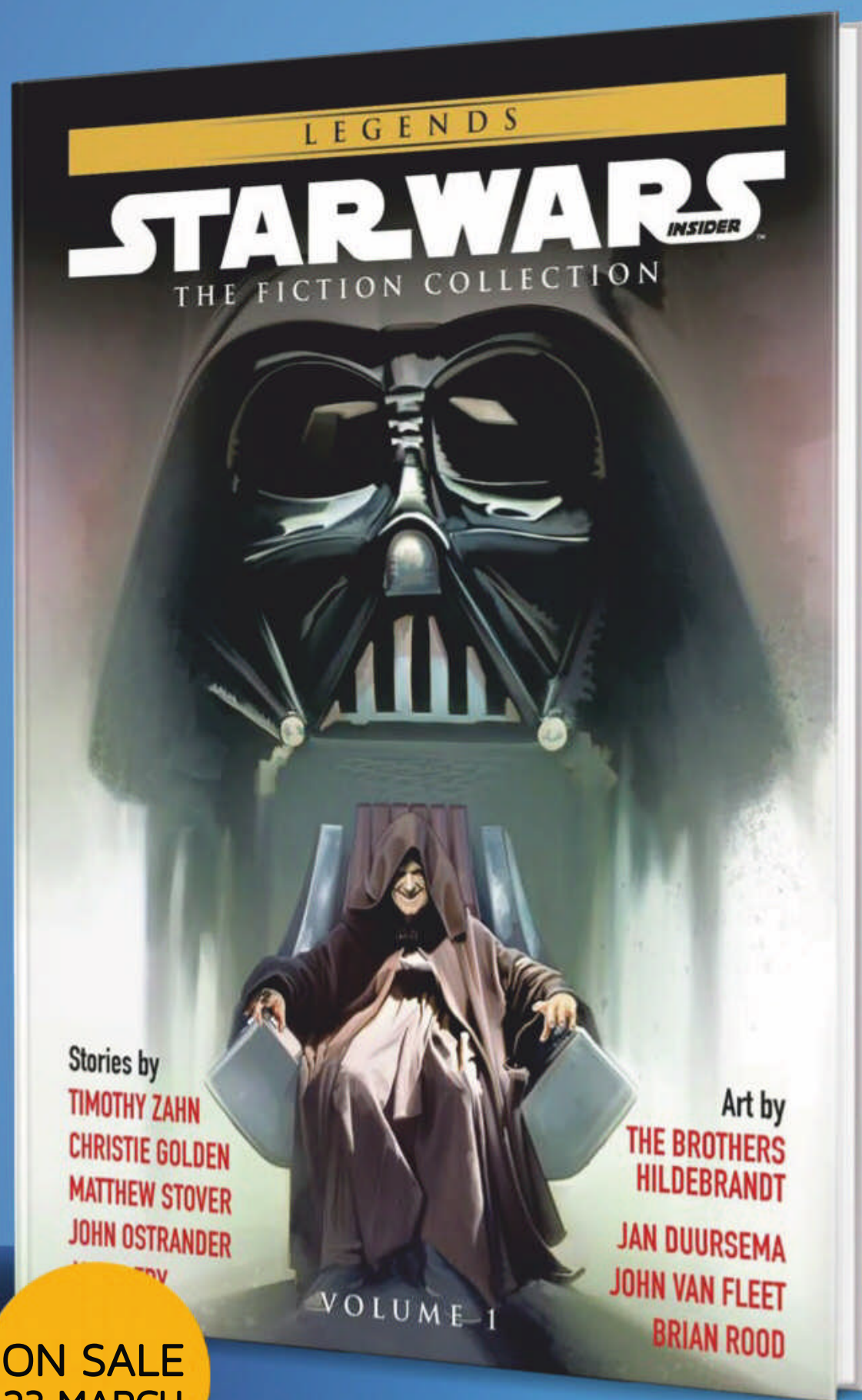
06 Variant cover for issue #2 of *The Rise of Kylo Ren*. Art by Jodie Muir.

07 *Star Wars: Obi-Wan and Anakin* #1 cover art by Marco Checchetto.

07

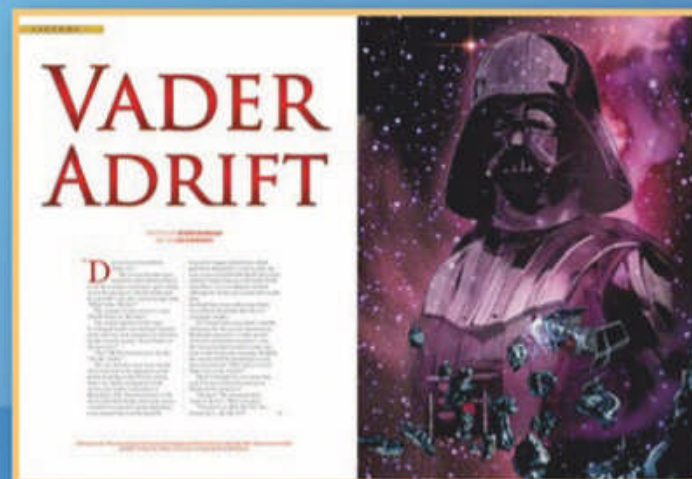
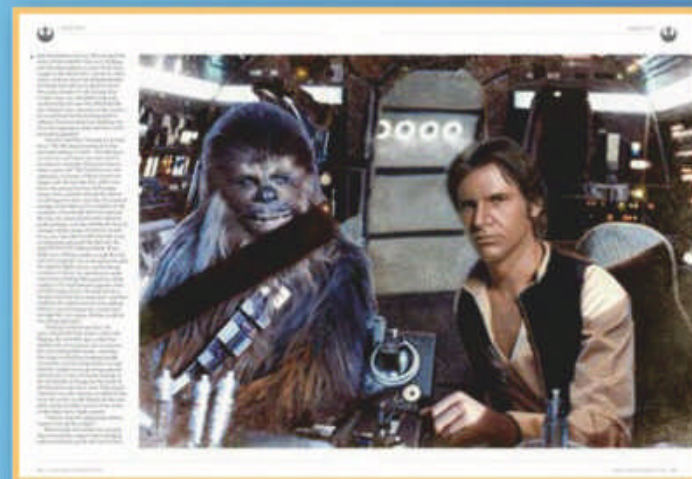
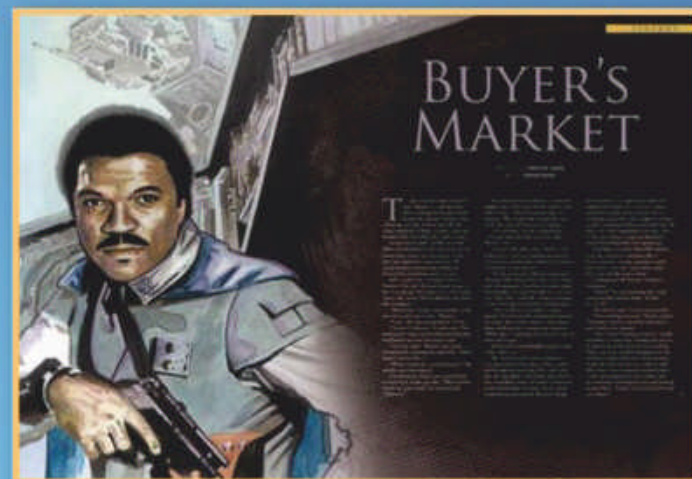


A STUNNING COLLECTION OF ORIGINAL *STAR WARS* TALES



ON SALE
23 MARCH

\$24.99 | Hardcover



Featuring Han Solo, Lando Calrissian, Darth Vader and more!
Written by renowned best-selling *Star Wars* authors, lavishly illustrated by some
of the greatest *Star Wars* artists.

AVAILABLE IN ALL GOOD STORES AND ONLINE

TITAN-COMICS.COM



© & TM 2021 Lucasfilm Ltd.



BECOME AN INSIDER & SAVE UP TO 40%!



Your #1 source for EVERYTHING *Star Wars*!

- **SAVE \$30!** 8 issues just \$49.99 Newsstand price: \$79.92
 - **EXCLUSIVE** subscriber cover!
 - **FREE** home delivery!
- **Become an INSIDER** – never miss an issue!

GET THE BEST PRICE – SUBSCRIBE TODAY!

TITAN-COMICS.COM/INSIDER

U.S. ☎ 1 800 261 6302 • Canada & ROW ☎ 818 487 4579 • U.K. & Europe ☎ +44 (0)1778 392085

EXPLORE THE *STAR WARS INSIDER* ARCHIVES

Want more Jedi? Check out these *Star Wars Insider* back issues.
Buy these and many more at www.titan-comics.com/insider



Complete your collection, buy a gift,
pick up a rare cover!

FIND THESE ISSUES AND MANY, MANY MORE AT
TITAN-COMICS.COM/INSIDER

VOLO7 CLOVNI1D0N KANOV7V7

A CERTAIN POINT OF VIEW

Our resident *Star Wars* expert, Michael Kogge, consults his library of holocrons and ancient Jedi texts to answer your questions about the events, people, and places of the galaxy far, far away....

The history of the *Star Wars* galaxy was constantly being written and rewritten as opposing forces sought to shape the vast expanse of star systems in their image. It is a timeline that is so deep and complex that it can be overwhelming, so sometimes it's a good idea to step back, focus on one particular event, and consider those that led to it. As a case in point, our first dip into the "A Certain Point of View" inbox takes us back to the very start of the Skywalker saga:

"I find the political scenes in Star Wars: The Phantom Menace (1999) enlightening in how they paint a picture of the complexity of running such a vast, interplanetary society. What went so wrong that it led to the Trade Federation blockade of Naboo and war?"
Sam Vale, Michigan.

As has often been the case with historical events on our own world, the blockade of Naboo boiled down to that most hotly debated of issues: taxes.

To encourage economic development far from the galactic core, the Republic designated trade zones around these outlying star systems to be

free from taxation. While this policy increased the flow of peoples and goods, it did not deter the pirates and plunderers who preyed on the trade caravans traveling these routes. The Outer Rim of the galaxy was, for the most part, a lawless frontier, outside of the general jurisdiction of the Republic. As a result, major shipping, financial, manufacturing, and commercial enterprises banded together for protection. They formed the Trade Federation, an organization designed to thwart piracy, arbitrate disagreements between factions, and present a united front to promote shared mercantile interests in the Republic's bureaucracy.

The Trade Federation gradually grew in prestige and power, with its own representative in the Republic and a sizable fleet of battleships. As the Trade Federation expanded in size, it, not the Republic, became the dominant player on and around these trade routes. It could exert its influence over neighboring systems and extort exorbitant fees



Major Players

Nute Gunray

The Viceroy of the Trade Federation was an arrogant, ruthless Neimodian who played the suffering victim during negotiations, yet deployed brute force to get his way. Gunray owed his rise to the echelons of the galactic elite to a shadowy figure who oversaw all his major decisions.



Lott Dod

Lott Dod snaked his way into representing the Trade Federation in the Republic Senate after the incident on Eriadu. Although he couldn't gather enough support to prevent the taxation bill from passing, he employed all the bureaucratic loopholes he could to keep the blockade of Naboo "legal."



Senator Sheev Palpatine

Not being one of the major power brokers in the Senate, Palpatine had made few enemies as a consequence—unlike most of his peers. Known for his gentility and willingness to compromise, the dispute propelled the senator to the role of Supreme Chancellor of the Republic.





under the guise of protection. Special privileges were afforded to associated members, while independent traders were compelled to follow onerous regulations and pay hefty tolls to use the Federation-supervised routes. The zones that the Republic had demarcated for free trade became, in effect, free only for those mega-corporations affiliated with the Trade Federation. Everyone else had to pay up whatever fee that the Trade Federation demanded.

A budget crisis compelled the Republic to act after decades of protest at such injustices. During the administration of Supreme Chancellor Valorum, the Senate passed legislation to tax the Free Trade Zones in the hopes that it would break the Trade Federation's monopolistic stranglehold over the region while also funding the ballooning Republic budget. In retaliation to what it viewed as a violation of their centuries-old authority, the Trade Federation blockaded the Mid Rim world of Naboo, with which it had a long-running dispute over exports of its plasma. Unforeseen at the time, the blockade set in motion a conflict that would shake the foundations of the Republic, sending the galaxy spinning into a devastating civil war and the rise of the Empire.

Timeline

52 BSW4

- Sheev Palpatine elected to represent Naboo in the Republic Senate.

33 BSW4

- The Nebula Front, a radical political group opposed to vast corporate conglomerates, assassinated the directors of the Trade Federation at the Eriadu trade summit. A group of ambitious Neimodians, led by Lott Dod and Nute Gunray, stepped in to lead the Trade Federation.

32 BSW4

- Queen Sanandrasa's two-year term in office ended. In her place, Padmé Amidala was elected to the throne.

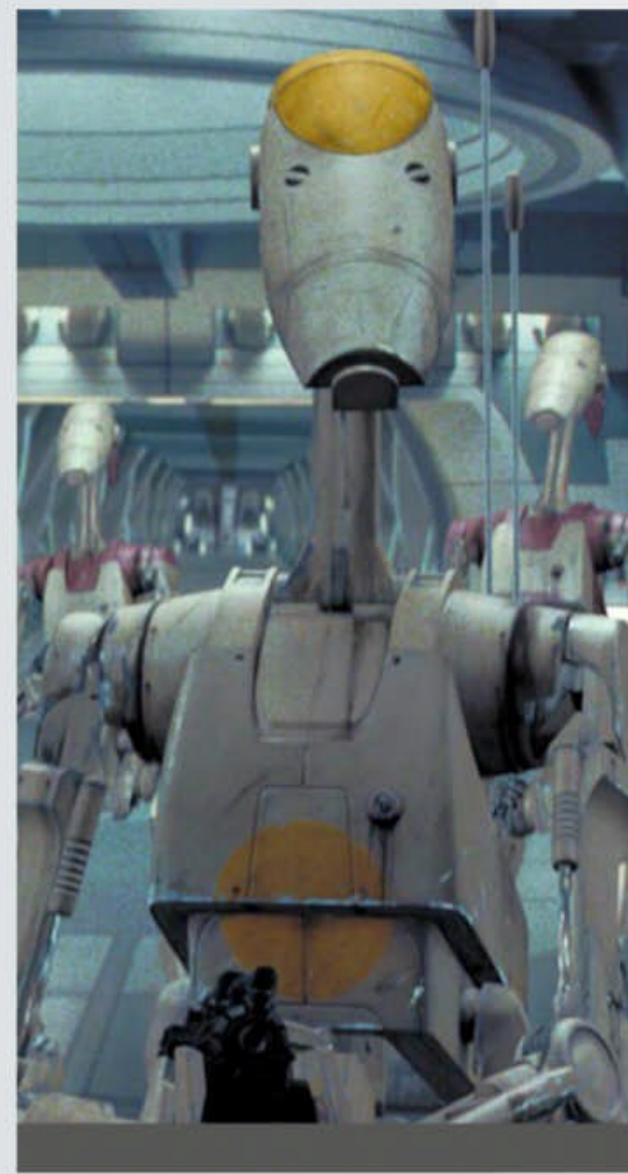
- In spite of Trade Federation opposition, the Republic Senate passed Prop 31-814D levying taxes on the formerly Free Trade Zones in the Mid and Outer Rim.

- The Trade Federation blockaded Naboo with warships converted from Lucrehulk-class LH-3210 cargo freighters, depriving the planet's citizens of necessary supplies, medicines, and food. During sessions of intense debate in the Republic's Senate, the Trade Federation maintained it had not broken any laws or committed acts of aggression against the planet Naboo.

- While the Senate remained deadlocked, Supreme Chancellor Valorum secretly dispatched two Jedi Knights as ambassadors to negotiate a peaceful settlement to the crisis.

Purpose-Built Paramilitary

To fill the ranks of its private security force—which was a military force in all but name—the Trade Federation moved from hiring mercenaries to purchasing preassembled battle droids. Not only were these automated soldiers much cheaper over the course of their mechanical lifespans, and required no meals or living quarters other than the space they occupied, they would never organize or rebel against the Federation about unfair working conditions. If there was one thing the corporate partners of the Trade Federation detested more than piracy, it was labor disputes.



Queen Padmé Amidala

Padmé Naberrie was a mere fourteen years old when she was elected as the Queen of Naboo. Her youthful idealism was inspiring, yet she also had practical government experience as a senatorial aide and junior legislator. She chose "Amidala" as her regal name upon election.



Supreme Chancellor Finis Valorum

A life's service in government and pedigree from a prominent Coruscant family vaulted Finis Valorum to the Supreme Chancellorship of the Republic. Though a skilled politician, baseless accusations of corruption tarnished his reputation and hampered his ability to resolve the Naboo crisis.



CONTACT US

Send your in-galaxy queries to starwarsinsider@titanemail.com with the subject header, "A Certain Point of View."

STAR WARS INSIDER WORLDWIDE

CELEBRATING THE SAGA



BECOMING BOUSHH

Infiltrating Jabba's palace in style

Destyni Baca credits her father for passing on his love of *Star Wars* to her during the prequel trilogy era, and her involvement in our fandom has grown exponentially since that time.

"I have been a member of the Dewback Ridge Garrison and the Rebel Legion Bantha Canyon Base since 2017," says Baca. "I am so grateful to be a part of such wonderful organizations that do

so much for our community. The opportunity to express my love for *Star Wars* is so important to me, as is passing the torch down to the younger generations."

Princess Leia has served as a source of inspiration for Baca since she was a child, and the scenes involving Leia as Boushh in *Star Wars: Return of the Jedi* (1983) remain particularly memorable moments for her.

"My mind was blown when the mysterious bounty hunter's helmet came off, revealing Leia as the one rescuing damsel-in-distress Han," remembers the fan. "A girl can be a bounty hunter?!" I thought to myself. I knew from that moment that girls could be fearless and inventive, as well as being the hero of the story."

It was only natural that Baca elected to pursue a cosplay build based on Leia's bounty hunter disguise. After acquiring the pieces necessary to construct the armored portions of the suit, the intrepid fan began working with her father to

INSIDER NEEDS YOU!

We want to hear from you! Tell us about your *Star Wars* experience. What made you want to become a fan? What have you done in the name of *Star Wars*? Tell us your *Star Wars* story by sending your photos, art, and letters here:

starwarsinsider@titanemail.com

Or via regular post:

UNITED STATES
Star Wars Worldwide,
Star Wars Insider,
Titan Magazines,
2819 Rosehall Lane,
Aurora, IL, 60503,
U.S.A.

UNITED KINGDOM
Star Wars Worldwide,
Star Wars Insider,
144 Southwark
Street, London,
SE1 0UP,
U.K.



assemble the ensemble. “My dad and I sanded, painted, and assembled the ‘hard parts’ of the costume, which includes shoulder armor, a bandolier, back tanks, and of course, the helmet,” explains Baca. A friend taught her how to sew, and the pair worked together to lay out patterns for the costume’s suede and leather elements. “With the help of numerous supply runs from my mom,” Baca adds, “we pulled off the bounty-hunter costume in time for our Garrison’s biggest annual event, the Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta.”

ARTISTS’ ALLEY

Talented *Star Wars* fans share their amazing drawings inspired by the galaxy far, far away....



01. “WOOKIEE COOKIES” BY MOLLY KATHRYN

Eleven-year-old Molly Kathryn says, “I was so thrilled when my *Star Wars Insider* arrived in the mail today! I have literally been waiting by the mailbox for months. I love two things in life: *Star Wars* and baking. I bake every day. I was so excited, I made a Wookiee cookie with some gingerbread!”

02. “RETRO RUFFIAN” BY JON

Fan artist Jon’s endeavor to craft a 1980s-inspired image of Darth Vader began when he looked at other pieces of retro art and decided he wanted to make something quite unique. Impressed by Vader’s powerful onscreen presence, Jon selected the Sith Lord as the focus for his colorful piece. “Darth Vader has always been visually amazing,” explains the artist, who sought to highlight what he describes as Vader’s “cool, vengeful, and mysterious” qualities in his artwork.



BOUNTY HUNTERS

Scouring the galaxy for the stars of *Star Wars*...

CRAFTSMANSHIP
KOTOBUKIYA

Meet the stars, show the evidence, win the bounty! Bounty Hunters is sponsored by Kotobukiya. Each issue's winner will receive a fantastic Kotobukiya *Star Wars* statue kit! To see more, visit www.facebook.com/kotobukiya



JULIAN GLOVER

An Imperial general veers towards his fans

Febe, Arno, and Jasper may have been cosplaying as the legendary rebels Princess Leia, Han Solo, and Luke Skywalker, but they truly had a blast when they met one of the Empire's finest officers at a recent convention.

Julian Glover, who portrayed General Veers and led the assault on Echo Base in *Star Wars: The Empire Strikes Back* (1980), delighted the three fans with stories about his work in the *Star Wars*, *Indiana Jones*, and *Game of Thrones* franchises.

"We had a fun experience meeting him," recalls Febe, "because he took his time to talk to us and was very kind." The group discussed the timeless nature of Glover's roles, and the actor even did a brief impersonation based on his appearance in *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade* (1989). To top it all off, Glover went out of his way to compliment the trio of friends on their outstanding outfits.

01



01 Febe, Arno, and Jasper pose with Julian Glover, known for his role as General Veers in *The Empire Strikes Back* (1980).

WORLDWIDE



BUILDING BUCKETS

The art of decorating stormtrooper armor

The latest *Star Wars* films have introduced us to the likes of jet troopers, patrol troopers, death troopers, and shoretroopers, but fan Vicki Solano has opted to develop fun and innovative designs that she applies to the classic Imperial stormtrooper helmet.

Solano's approach to each project, using purchased trooper headwear, varies as much as the patterns themselves. Some of the buckets simply receive a fresh coat of paint, while others have been vacuum formed or adorned with no-bake clay or pages from comics.

"I like to do a lot of mash-ups of retro cartoons and movies with *Star Wars*," says Solano of her subject matter. These topics are reflected in a stormtrooper helmet based on the color scheme of Scooby Doo's Mystery Machine van, with an AT-AT painted to match. BB-8 and Han Solo

in Hoth gear from *Star Wars: The Empire Strikes Back* (1980) have also been tackled by Solano in her crafty endeavors. These pieces serve as wonderful tributes to George Lucas' work, and the Southern Californian fan even named her son Lucas after the Maker himself!

Solano is also an avid cosplayer who attends conventions and other *Star Wars*-related events every year. As a member of the Pinkwookiee's Pink Crew, Solano wears a Pink Ewok costume that would surely make the inhabitants of the Forest Moon of Endor cheer. For another build, Solano assembled a Han Solo-like outfit that she wears to cosplay as a character she named "Hannah Solo." The ingenious fan even constructed a wearable *Millennium Falcon* out of papier-mâché that includes a seat for her Wookiee co-pilot (also known as her dog Rigby!).





STITCHING IN THE STARS

Intergalactic embroiderer maps the *Star Wars* galaxy

Marriage usually marks a new chapter in the lives of most people. For Ana Lúcia Maretti Ceccarelli, her wedding represented a commitment to *Star Wars*!

Ceccarelli's husband maintains a collection of more than 2,000 *Star Wars* action figures, and the couple are members of a Brazilian fan club, regularly attending screenings of the films set in a galaxy far, far away. With her husband's enthusiasm for his hobby quickly capturing his wife's imagination too, embroidery teacher Ceccarelli devised an

ingenious collection of gifts to give to her husband that just happened to combine her professional talents with the *Star Wars* galaxy... literally!

Ceccarelli decided to embroider a series of collectibles that reflected various planetary locales from the films. "It was the perfect way to incorporate my crafting into our collection," says Ceccarelli. "For the embroidery I've used several techniques to add texture and colors, as I've tried to recreate the scenes we love so much."

The results of Ceccarelli's hard work are absolutely stunning, as the

fan managed to capture each world's unique attributes while making sure to reflect the roles they played in the movies. From Tatooine's twin suns and Hoth's shield generator to Dagobah's swamps and the Death Star II in Endor's sky, Ceccarelli's creations act as a beautiful travel guide to the galaxy's most interesting locales. Other highlights include Naboo, Coruscant, Geonosis, and the tree dwellings of Kashyyyk. Each of the detailed pieces would surely feel right at home in the Jedi Temple's archives.



TK-101

HINTS, TIPS, AND IDEAS FOR CRAFTING
YOUR OWN *STAR WARS* GALAXY



THE GREAT GALACTIC BAKE-OFF

As Star Wars Insider celebrates its 200th issue, we couldn't think of a more fitting way to commemorate the occasion than by baking ourselves a special birthday cake with a Star Wars twist!

For this first edition of our new crafting feature, TK-101, we're going to show you how we baked a *Star Wars*-themed birthday cake—and a very specific cake at that. Back in 1978, when the *Star Wars* saga was just one movie, the first anniversary of its release was marked by a special poster known as the *Star Wars* Happy Birthday One-Sheet, featuring a cutely decorated cake surrounded by eleven of the twelve original Kenner *Star Wars* action figures (see insert). What happened to the Jawa, no one knows. Was its absence a cryptic foretelling of the future rarity of the nylon-caped figure, or was the disgusting little creature somewhere around the back, scavenging for ingredients?

The task we set ourselves was to replicate that cake, although we intended to make a few special modifications ourselves.

SIZE MATTERS NOT, BUT...

Making a cake is usually a piece of, well, *cake*! Mix the ingredients together, stick them into a suitable baking tin, and pop that in the oven. But our recreation of the *Star Wars* first anniversary cake had an extra caveat—we wanted it to be exactly to scale with the twelve Kenner action figures that provided a guard

of honor around the original. Safe in the knowledge that the standard size for *Star Wars* action figures is 3.75 inches tall, the easy part was figuring out the dimensions that our cake needed to be. Easy, that is, until we had to find a cake tin that was big enough. A frenzied trawl through our kitchen drawers drew a blank, so it was time to turn to our parents... and then the parents of our friends. In the end, it was Steve's mom, homespun domestic goddess Maureen, who came through, with a baking tray that measured 12 inches in diameter. An inch shy of our estimate for the original, but close enough.

A TOUCH OF STARDUST

Next, we set our mixing bowl in attack position and

measured out our ingredients. The cake would be comprised of two standard sponge cake layers—the main cake and a smaller layer for the logo (see boxout for a handy recipe). We wanted the inside to look as spectacular as the outside, so added bright blue food coloring and a starfield of silver candy cake balls and white chocolate stars to the mix.

Once baked, we carved the top layer into the shape of the logo, stacked our layers, and began to pipe on the white and blue icing. With the addition of more silver balls and a handful of candles, the cake

was ready for its photoshoot.

Maybe not in the same league as the original but it's got it where it counts.

CHOOSE YOUR DESTINY

Eleven action figures was okay for the first anniversary (that was all that was available at the time, ignoring the missing Jawa), but we had grander ambitions. 200 ambitions, in fact. Luckily the team at *Insider* have a creditable collection of *Star Wars* toys, and we surrounded our version of the classic cake with an additional 189 characters and critters—including a Kenner Jawa (albeit the cloth cape version. We're not made of money!) 🕹



BASIC SPONGE CAKE RECIPE

Ingredients

3 eggs
175g caster sugar
175g butter/margarine
175g self-raising flour

Method

- Preheat the oven to 180 degrees (fan oven).
- Next, cream the butter and sugar until light and fluffy.
- Then add each egg, one at a time whilst adding a bit of flour each time.
- Fold in the remaining flour until all ingredients are mixed in.
- Grease your cake tins with some butter.
- Add the mixture into two cake tins, making sure they're equal.
- Put both in the oven and bake for 20 minutes.





The *Star Wars* Archive

The behind-the-scenes
story of a galaxy far,
far away....!

BANTHA TRACKS

Of all the other-worldly creatures designed for the *Star Wars* saga, perhaps none feel as “real” as the banthas of Tatooine—those enormous beasts of burden ridden by the Tusken Raiders in *Star Wars: A New Hope* (1977).

Such believability was achieved in large part because a living, breathing being was disguised beneath the bantha’s woolly hide and prop horns. The bantha was played by Mardji, an Asian elephant that usually spent her days water-skiing at Marine World Africa U.S.A, a popular tourist attraction located in Redwood Shores, California at the time.

Mardji’s scenes were shot in Death Valley, with Doug Beswick playing the part of the Tusken Raider who rode her. ▶

01 Mardji, the 22-year old Asian elephant, prepares for her moment of screen fame.



02

- The bantha was initially visualized by concept artist Ralph McQuarrie in a series of thumb-nail sketches, depicting the large creature as having a pig-like face, the body of a bison, and the stature of something larger. When it came to casting an animal that could embody this design, an 8,500-pound elephant was the perfect, and probably only, choice.

“When it came to casting an animal that could embody this design, an 8,500-pound elephant was the perfect, and probably only, choice.”

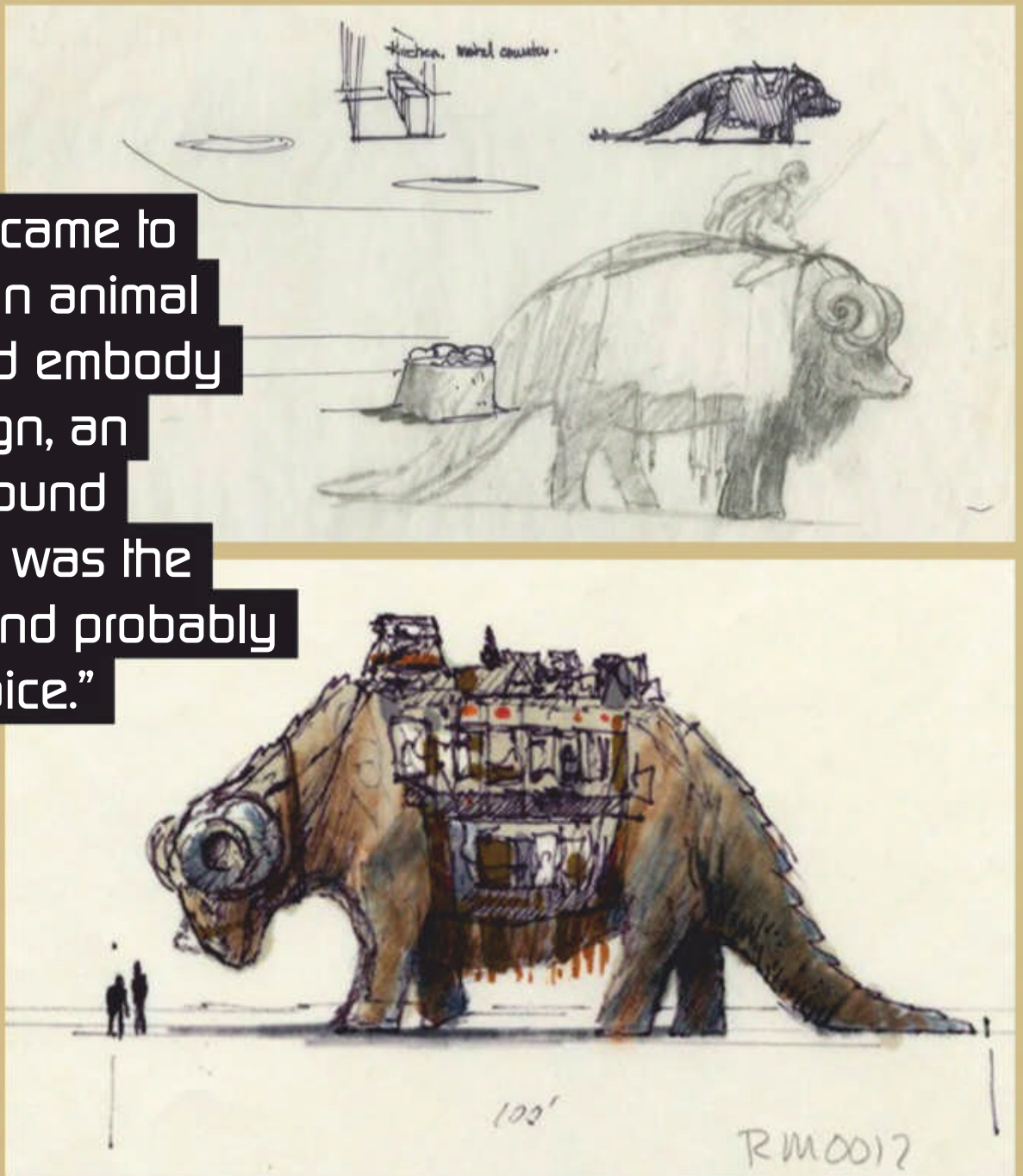
Elephants are noted for their intelligence and prodigious strength, which meant Mardji could be relied upon to give a convincing performance while coping with the heavy costume in the oppressive heat of Death Valley. To make the task easier and distract her from shrugging off her garb, a ready supply of apples was provided to the gentle giant by her handler.

The costume she wore took a month to develop, with a team of six prototyping the various layers that would eventually render Mardji unrecognizable. The creature’s “fur” was actually constructed from palm-tree fronds, made to look more realistic with the addition of horse hair around the face. The body was dressed with a rugged blanket and saddle, making the palm-frond fur less obvious. The horns began life as ventilation tubing, and Mardji’s trunk and beard were hidden away behind a mask molded from chicken wire and foam.

To achieve Luke Skywalker’s view of two banthas through his macrobinoculars, Mardji was filmed twice and the shot composited in post production. Her performance was later used as reference for the animators working on the AT-ATs for *The Empire Strikes Back* (1980).

Mardji sadly passed away in 1995, but her unique contribution to *Star Wars* is unforgettable.

03



04





05



Return of the Bantha

While we only spotted a pair of banthas in the original *Star Wars* movie, the lumbering creatures have returned to the saga on a number of notable occasions.

In the 1997 Special Edition of *Star Wars: Return of the Jedi*, an entire herd of the magnificent beasts roamed across Tatooine's Dune Sea, in one of several new shots created especially for the original trilogy's re-release. A brief cameo in *Star Wars: The Phantom Menace* (1999) was followed by a slightly more lingering appearance in *Star Wars: Attack of the Clones* (2002), at around an hour and four minutes into the movie (see above), and more recently, banthas had a starring role—ridden single file by Tusken Raiders—in the second season of *The Mandalorian* (as pictured below).



06

02 An early bantha concept sketch by Ralph McQuarrie.

03 McQuarrie sketched a larger bantha for *Star Wars: The Empire Strikes Back* (1980).

04 Ralph McQuarrie's production painting featured a pig-snouted bantha design.

05 Mardji in the almost-completed bantha costume.

06 Prototype costume elements for the bantha were refined and built up over a month-long development process.





S T A R L I G H T

Go Together

PART TWO

By Charles Soule

Star Wars Insider's all-new fiction continues, in this exclusive follow-up to *The High Republic* novel, *Light of the Jedi*.

Previously:

Having halted a catastrophic malfunction that threatened to destroy Starlight Beacon before its mission of hope could even begin, engineers Joss and Pikka Adren found themselves battling to save lives from a deadly new threat to peace in the Republic – the Nihil...



A long time ago, in a galaxy far, far away....



ikka Adren surveyed the room, sensing the comforting bulk of her husband just behind her. Joss, for

once, was being quiet—a good thing, considering the people seated around the table waiting for them. They did not seem like types for idle chit-chat.

She and Joss had been on this station before. Starlight Beacon, the massive installation constructed in the Outer Rim as one of Chancellor Lina Soh's Great Works, emblematic of the Galactic Republic. But since her last time here, the path she and her husband had taken had led them to unbelievable places, and they had done things she still couldn't believe they'd achieved,

fear—Pikka felt herself trembling, and forced herself back to calm. Whatever the reason she and her husband had been summoned here, she and Joss had wanted to help. That was all.

On the chancellor's left, a high-ranking officer in the Republic Defense Coalition. His name was Admiral Povel Kronara, silver-haired in a uniform of gray and blue, and Pikka knew him a little bit too. A good, straightforward, hugely competent career soldier.

The rest of the seats were occupied by a combination of government and coalition officials—she knew Senator Izzet Noor, but the others were new to her. A bunch of those gray and blue RDC uniforms, though. Pikka frowned a little. A lot of warriors for a galaxy supposedly at peace.

"Welcome," said Chancellor Soh. "Please sit. We want to get through the debriefings as soon as possible."

Joss and Pikka stepped forward, pulling out chairs and sitting down. The message they'd received, from one

What is this, exactly?"

Pikka grimaced.

Avar Kriss grinned.

"I get it," she said. "I was up late last night myself. Quite a party. I know this isn't what any of us want to be doing this morning, but it won't take long. You were both instrumental in helping to defeat the Nihil at Kur. We have some questions about how you did it."

Pikka exchanged a glance with her husband, and then looked back at the Jedi and shrugged.

"We just tried to stay alive," she said.

"Not much more to it."

"I disagree," said Admiral Kronara.

"You flew one of our Longbeams, as part of a Republic Defense Coalition fleet assembled to go up against a group of Outer Rim marauders called the Nihil."

"You helped bring justice for the billions of innocent lives ended by their savage attacks," added Chancellor Soh, somberly, yet with a note of approval, of consequences duly meted out.

"Just so," Kronara agreed.

PIKKA ADREN SURVEYED THE ROOM, SENSING THE COMFORTING BULK OF HER HUSBAND JUST BEHIND HER. JOSS, FOR ONCE, WAS BEING QUIET.

or even survived. As a result they now stood in an elegantly-appointed conference chamber, summoned to some sort of debriefing with a good portion of the Republic's most senior leadership. Chancellor Soh herself sat at the head of the table, with a blonde human woman in white and gold robes to her right—Jedi Master Avar Kriss, the highest-ranking member of her Order stationed at Starlight.

Pikka knew Master Kriss from a space battle in which they had recently both participated. A space battle! What terrible sins had she committed in a former life to find herself fighting in a space battle? She and Joss were basically just high-level construction workers. They'd helped to complete Starlight Beacon, in fact.

In truth, she had no one to blame but herself. She and Joss had actually volunteered to fight at the Battle of Kur.

Remembering the feeling of that battle—the chaos, the intensity, the

of Kronara's aides, was vague, only indicating that their presence was requested to help with the creation of an after-action report on the Battle of Kur. While Pikka didn't have much interest in reliving those moments, she understood the importance of passing along their impressions of the fight.

But she and her husband had figured on a quick interview with an RDC functionary, not an audience with some of the most important people in the galaxy. This felt like some sort of interrogation—or a trial! She was exhausted, Joss was too. Neither of them had slept well since Kur, and they'd probably overindulged at Starlight Beacon's dedication ceremony the night before. She felt like a shadow, barely present, her insubstantiality underscored by the brightness of everyone else in the room.

"So... good morning," Joss said.

"If I'd known this would be a formal occasion, I'd have brushed my teeth.

He tapped a control on the table, and a hovering comms droid projected a two-dimensional image. It was a bit crude, more graphic than realistic, but Pikka recognized what was being displayed immediately.

At her side, Joss grunted. He had recognized it too.

The Kur Nebula. And in a zone not far from its center, a vast array of warships depicted as brightly colored symbols. The Republic's forces in green—a number of RDC cruisers including Admiral Kronara's flagship, the elegant *Emissary*-class *Third Horizon*, along with a wide complement of smaller attack ships, the mid-sized Longbeams and single-pilot Incom Z-28 Skywing fighters. The Jedi cruiser *Ataraxia*, and its own spread of the small, nimble Vectors, each with a Jedi pilot at the helm, all in blue. And the Nihil in red—their ugly, blocky, spike-covered ships, each with the three glowing lightning strikes slashed across

their hull. The Nihil vessels were like jagged, broken teeth in a diseased jaw.

She and Joss were somewhere in that mix too. One of those Longbeams was theirs, the *Aurora III*, with Pikka navigating and running the weapons systems and Joss in the pilot's chair. Flying, fighting, trying desperately to stay alive.

Pikka clenched her trembling hand. She could feel the weapon controls under her fingertips, see the Nihil targets on her display. Their cockpit awash in the green light of the nebula, not knowing if they'd be alive ten seconds later. She could hear Joss, shouting out—

"By the light... what are they doing?" Joss cried out.

Looking out from the Longbeam's cockpit, he could see one of the Nihil ships, a big, bulky thing. He thought maybe it was a converted waste hauler,

and deliberately trying to ram into Republic ships.

Joss caught panicked reports from other pilots across the fleet. None of them were cowards—far from it—but no one had ever fought anything like this.

A proton torpedo lanced out from the Longbeam's weapons array, and a small, ugly Nihil fighter vanished. "Good shot, Pikka!" Joss called back.

His wife didn't answer. Staying focused on the task at hand. That was good. They both needed to do that. He flew, she chose the targets. And it was working. As Joss looked over his tactical display, he had a sense that the Nihil were losing, slowly but surely. RDC discipline and training was overcoming the Nihil's willingness to fight dirty.

Something happened.

The red icons representing the Nihil forces began blipping in and out of existence, disappearing and reappearing. Joss slammed the heel of his hand against the console, figuring maybe there was a short—nothing like

"We still don't know how the Nihil did this," said Admiral Kronara, "but we know the tactic was devastating in the battle-space. Only the Jedi seemed able to effectively fight them off, through their enhanced reflexes and speed."

"Through the Force," Avar said.

Kronara gave a tight nod in acknowledgment, then turned back to Pikka and Joss.

"I misspoke," the admiral said.

"The Jedi were not the only pilots who seemed able to counteract the Nihil micro-jumps."

He pointed, all the way down the table, right at them.

"You did it too. Your Longbeam was able to react and maneuver with precision and speed beyond that of the rest of our fleet. Where others died, you two survived. We need to know how you did it."

Pikka swallowed. She glanced at her husband.

"Would you believe we're just that good?" Joss said.

TWO SKYWINGS AND ANOTHER LONGBEAM WERE ON THE NIHIL'S TAIL, ALL MOVING AT SUCH SPEED THAT THEY HAD NO OPPORTUNITY TO DODGE.

and that suspicion was underscored when the ship opened its cargo compartment and released a sea of horrible sludge in its wake.

Another Longbeam and two Skywings were on the Nihil's tail, all moving at such speed that they had no opportunity to dodge. They flew straight into the cloud of awful, gray-brown filth, which was ignited by their engines, and all three Republic ships vanished into balls of flame.

What a horrible, disgusting, dishonorable way to go. And it wasn't the worst tactic the Nihil were using out here, either.

The Nihil fought like beasts, like cornered animals, trying anything they could to destroy, to kill. They used laser cannons, missiles and torpedoes, but that was just the beginning. Some of their ships were venting radioactive gas from their reactors, poisoning pilots unlucky enough to fly through it. Others, heavily armored, were actively

a good thump to fix a poorly seated wire—but nothing changed, except that now, Republic and Jedi ships started to disappear from the display. Not so dramatic when it was little icons on a screen, but... Joss looked up. He could see what was actually happening with his own eyes, and it was horrifying. Unbelievable. The Nihil ships making what seemed to be micro-jumps through hyperspace, tiny hops that made them impossible to target, vanishing and reappearing short distances away. And all around them, explosions blossoming against the blackness of space, as good people died trying to do the right thing.

Pikka looked at the projection above the conference table, remembering the horror of that moment, realizing that their enemy was capable of something they weren't, and had no way to fight.

"Probably not," said Kronara.

"Maybe we used the Force," he said.

"In a way, all living things use the Force," Avar said. "But no. You didn't."

Chancellor Soh spoke, the first words she'd said since welcoming them in.

"Joss, Pikka. We need to know what you did. Was it luck, or something we can replicate? Something that might save other lives, in potential fights yet to come."

"But the Nihil are gone. All of their ships were destroyed in the battle."

"Yes," the chancellor said. "I know. Still... indulge us."

Pikka looked at Joss. He shrugged.

"Tell them," she said.

Joss looked at the uptight, buttoned-down, frowning faces seated around the table. The only people who seemed relaxed were the chancellor and the space wizard, which made sense—they

were the most powerful people in the room. He sighed. They were stuck.

"We sliced the security systems on the Longbeam's operational code," he said. "Or, actually..."

He pointed his thumb at Pikka.

"...she did."

"Thanks a lot," his wife muttered.

"Slicing Republic military hardware carries heavy penalties," one of the RDC officials said.

"Higher than dying?" Joss shot back, heated. "Pikka and I are tinkerers. It's how we make our living. We figure out systems and think of ways to improve them. Whether it's a space station or a starship, we both like to know how stuff works. We weren't going to take one of your Longbeams into a battle unless we knew what it could do."

He looked at Pikka, nodded for her to continue.

"So, yeah. I sliced the ops code.

That's all. I didn't change anything."

"Well..." Joss said.

Pikka shot him a glare, then took

"All right," she heard Joss say. "That'll work. Let's see what this thing can actually do."

The Longbeam moved again, sidestepping, skipping across space. It felt different, alive in a way that it hadn't before.

Joss grunted in approval, and then he flew, and Pikka fought, and around them, the Nihil ships exploded, and somehow, impossibly, they survived.

"Those systems are linked to prevent overstressing the Longbeam's frame! You could have broken apart!" said another RDC flunky.

Joss rolled his eyes. He opened his mouth to answer, but Pikka got in first.

"Not with Joss at the helm," she said, simple, short, confident.

"I have a good feel for what a ship can take," Joss said.

Silence around the table, as the assemblage thought this over.

"Pffff," Joss said. "Can't believe we got up early for this. Skipped breakfast! As a matter of fact..."

He stood up.

"Let's go eat. I'm starving, and you know how good the food is on Starlight. Let's hit a canteen, and then we'll find a transport back to Coruscant and take that little trip we've got planned, yeah?"

Pikka stretched and rubbed her eyes, trying to find a little energy.

"All right, Joss," she said. "I could use a cup of caf."

A chime from their door, and they both looked in that direction. Frowning, Joss tapped a control. The door opened, revealing Admiral Kronara.

"May I come in?" he said. "It won't take long."

"Are you going to throw us in the brig?" Joss said. "Fair warning, I don't do well in cages."

"I'm sure that's true," the admiral said. "No. I have an offer for you."

"Let him in, Joss," Pikka said, and her husband stepped aside.

THE LONGBEAM MOVED AGAIN, SIDESTEPPING, SKIPPING ACROSS SPACE. IT FELT DIFFERENT, ALIVE IN A WAY IT HADN'T BEFORE. JOSS GRUNTED IN APPROVAL.

a deep breath. She looked up at the battle display, remembering.

"Uncouple the thrusters!" Joss shouted at her.

"What?" Pikka frowned.

"That thing you found in the code!" he said, as the ship jerked sharply, probably narrowly avoiding some version of a hot, agonizing death.

She realized what he meant. When she had sliced into the Longbeam's code back on the *Third Horizon* before they'd taken it out, she'd seen that all its thrusters were computer controlled, linked together to ensure smooth maneuvering. But it was possible, with a few elegant shortcuts, to unlink them, so each thruster could operate independently, under manual control.

Pikka entered the commands, and suddenly the ship's handling felt... looser. More open.

"So..." Admiral Kronara said, "you broke our ship to save our ship."

Joss nodded.

"Guess so."

The admiral looked at the chancellor.

"Thank you both," said the most powerful woman in the galaxy. "You may leave."

"*You may leave*," Joss said, perfectly imitating the chancellor's tone as he paced around their temporary quarters. "What the hell was that? We were doing them a favor fighting in that battle! We're not soldiers. We were just trying to help—from the *Legacy Run* disaster all the way to Kur, all we've done is try to help. And now they treat us like criminals!"

"It's all right," Pikka said. "It doesn't matter. It's over, and it doesn't seem like they're going to do anything to us for slicing the Longbeam."

The door slid closed behind Kronara, and he spoke.

"I'll make this simple," he said.

"We are not confident that the Nihil we destroyed at Kur represented the entirety of their numbers. We have to be sure. Chancellor Soh has authorized the RDC to inaugurate a special task force to hunt down any Nihil that might be out there. Find their base, learn more, eradicate them if we can."

"Okay..." Pikka said.

"I would like you two to be part of that task force."

Joss snorted, incredulous.

"We're contractors," he said.

"Spanner monkeys. What are you talking about?"

"You're innovative and brilliant. You two improvised strategies to save lives during the *Legacy Run* disaster, and then you figured out a way, on the fly, to survive completely new enemy tactics during the Battle of Kur. If you're willing, I could use you both. You seem

to be the sort of people who like to help, and that's what I'm offering. The Republic needs you. Are you up for it?"

Pikka answered, without hesitation.

"No," she said.

Both Joss and the admiral looked at her, surprised.

"My husband and I had a vacation planned for when we finished our work building this station, and then we got caught up in all of this Nihil business, and it's been non-stop ever since. We deserve a break."

She folded her arms.

"So, we want our two weeks on Amfar. Sun, sand, and no fighting. But after that, I think we can do what you're asking."

"We can?" Joss said.

"Don't you think?" Pikka said, looking at him.

Joss considered.

"Yeah," he said. "I guess I do."

Admiral Kronara nodded, and stepped to the door.

"See you in two weeks," he said.

"There's a lot to do."

The door closed behind the admiral, and Joss turned to Pikka.

"What do you think that means?" he said, seeming a little taken aback. "What did you sign us up for?"

She stepped up to him, reached her arms around him. Her hands barely met in the small of his back.

"I don't know, Joss," Pikka said, looking up at him. "But wherever we go," she smiled, "we'll go together." 🍷



NEXT ISSUE: FIRST DUTY

Exclusive to
Star Wars Insider:
Part One of an all-new
The High Republic story
by Cavan Scott!



JEDI MASTER'S QUIZ

From the Death Star trench to dogfights with swarms of deadly TIE fighters, Rebel Alliance and Resistance starfighters embody the heroism of their pilots. Activate your targeting computer and prove your *Star Wars* knowledge. Compiled by Jay Stobie

"STAY ON TARGET!"

Feel like you can take on the whole Empire yourself? Then you'll need to ace this starfighter trivia test!

EXCEPTIONAL X-WINGS

1: What was the call sign for Luke Skywalker's X-wing at the Battle of Yavin?

- A/ Red Leader
- B/ Red Five
- C/ Red Seven
- D/ Red Twelve



2: Who led Blue Squadron in support of the rebel ground troops at the Battle of Scarif?

- A/ Wedge Antilles
- B/ Garven Dreis
- C/ Antoc Merrick
- D/ Dutch Vander



3: How many different X-wing fighters did we see Poe Dameron use in the sequel trilogy?

- A/ One
- B/ Two
- C/ Three
- D/ Four

4: In the movies, which location did Luke Skywalker's X-wing fighter never fly to?

- A/ Ahch-To
- B/ Savareen
- C/ Dagobah
- D/ Ajan Kloss

5: Besides Poe Dameron, who piloted an X-wing fighter at both the Battle of Starkiller Base and the Battle of Exegol?

- A/ Nien Nunb
- B/ Stomeroni Starck
- C/ Ello Asty
- D/ Snap Wexley

WONDEROUS Y-WINGS



6: Where did the *Ghost* crew procure a supply of Y-wings for the Rebellion?

- A/ Reklam Station
- B/ Black Spire Outpost
- C/ Faos Station
- D/ Niima Outpost

7: Which type of Imperial vessel did Y-wings bombers disable over Scarif?

- A/ *Gozanti*-class cruiser
- B/ Death Star
- C/ *Arquitens*-class light cruiser
- D/ Star Destroyer



8: What planet did Zorii Bliss make an escape from in a Y-wing?

- A/ Kijimi
- B/ Pasaana
- C/ Kef Bir
- D/ Tatooine



9: Which squadron's Y-wings participated in the Death Star trench run?

- A/ Rogue Squadron
- B/ Green Squadron
- C/ Gold Squadron
- D/ Gray Squadron

10: Who accompanied Zorii Bliss in her Y-wing during the Battle of Exegol?

- A/ D-O
- B/ Babu Frik
- C/ BB-8
- D/ Maz Kanata

UTILITARIAN U-WINGS

11: Why did Cassian Andor take a U-wing to Jedha?

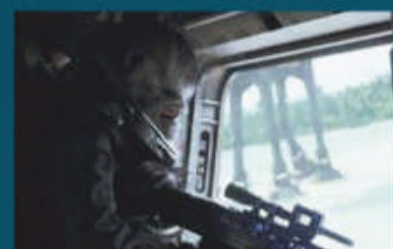
- A/ To find the Guardians of the Whills
- B/ To rescue Bor Gullet
- C/ To obtain kyber crystals
- D/ To meet with Saw Gerrera

12: Who rescued Jyn Erso and her cohorts in a U-wing after the Death Star fired on Jedha City?

- A/ Bodhi Rook
- B/ Jyn Erso
- C/ K-2SO
- D/ Chirrut Îmwe

13: What did Bistan help destroy while operating a U-wing's door gun at Scarif?

- A/ Communications dish
- B/ AT-ACT
- C/ Citadel Tower
- D/ Ahsoka Tano



14: Where did Cassian Andor's U-wing encounter its demise?

- A/ Eadu
- B/ Lah'mu
- C/ Yavin 4
- D/ Wobani

15: U-wings primarily served what role in the Rebel Alliance's fleet?

- A/ Bomber
- B/ Troop transport
- C/ Starfighter
- D/ Comm vessel

“NEVER TELL ME THE ODDS!”

Solve these math problems where each droid's value is based on the sum of the numbers in its name:



1. $BB-8 + C-3PO$
2. $L3-37 \times K-250$
3. $R4-P17 - R5-D4$
4. $(BB-9E)$
5. $(R2-D2 \times AP-5) C1-IOP$

“THAT’S NOT HOW THE FORCE WORKS!”

What is the link between these five scenes from the Skywalker saga?



WERE YOU ABLE TO NAVIGATE YOUR WAY TO THE CORRECT ANSWERS?

0-9: You couldn't shake 'em! Maybe a Starspeeder 3000 is more your level.

10-19: Don't get cocky. You need to log a few more flight hours back in the simulator.

20-24: Great shot, kid! Your talent is truly one in a million.

QUIZ 1. B, 2. C, 3. C, 4. B, 5. D, 6. A, 7. D, 8. A, 9. C, 10. B, 11. D, 12. C, 13. B, 14. A, 15. B. “NEVER TELL ME THE ODDS!” 1. 11, 2. 26, 3. 3, 4. 81, 5. 10. “THAT’S NOT HOW THE FORCE WORKS!” 1. The Skywalker lightsaber: Lost in Cloud City, found by some porcs on Acherio, used by Finn on Takodana, taken by Obi-Wan Kenobi on Mustafar, and borrowed by Han Solo on Hoth.

NEXT ISSUE

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE | ISSUE 201

STAR WARS

I N S I D E R

201

INTERVIEW

Matt Lanter

*Star Wars:
The Clone Wars'*
Anakin Skywalker!

Untold Secrets

How *The Rise of
Skywalker* novelizations
shed new light on the
end of a saga!

Radio Rebels

40 years of *Star
Wars* audio drama!

How to work the Wookiee Look

Everything you ever wanted to know about
the galaxy's favorite walking carpet!

+ Joonas Suotamo's
Chewbacca boot camp

THE MANDALORIAN

Insider's essential guide to every
episode from Seasons One and Two!

Insider
Exclusive:
All-New
Star Wars
Fiction!

COMPLETE YOUR STAR WARS COLLECTION! FOR AS LOW AS \$14.99 EA.



*Star Wars:
The Skywalker Saga*
The Official Collector's Edition



*Star Wars:
The Mandalorian*
The Art & Imagery Volume One



*Star Wars:
The Rise of Skywalker*
The Official Collector's Edition



*Star Wars:
The Last Jedi*
The Ultimate Guide



*Star Wars:
The Last Jedi*
The Official Movie Companion

COMMEMORATIVE
MOVIE
EDITIONS



*Star Wars:
The Last Jedi*
The Official Collector's Edition



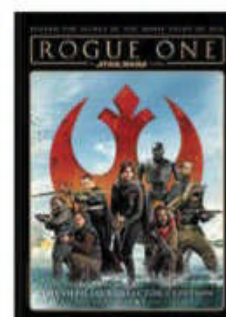
*Star Wars IV:
A New Hope*
The Official Celebration Special



*Solo:
A Star Wars Story*
The Ultimate Guide



*Solo:
A Star Wars Story*
The Official Collector's Edition



*Rogue One:
A Star Wars story*
The Official Collector's Edition



*Rogue One:
A Star Wars story*
The Official Mission Debrief

THE BEST OF
STAR WARS
INSIDER



*The Best of Star Wars
Insider Volume One*



*The Best of Star Wars
Insider Volume Two*



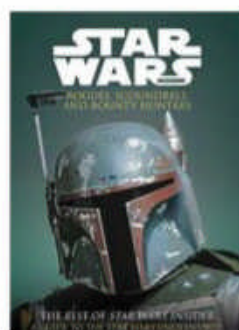
*The Best of Star Wars
Insider Volume Three*



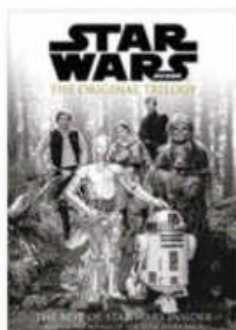
*The Best of Star Wars
Insider Volume Four*



*Star Wars: Aliens,
Creatures and Droids*



*Star Wars: Rogues, Scoundrels
and Bounty Hunters*



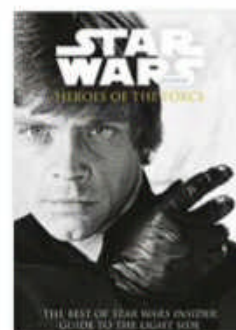
*Star Wars:
The Original Trilogy*



*Star Wars:
The Saga Begins*



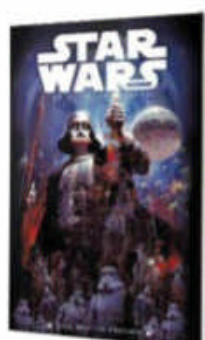
*Star Wars:
Icons of the Galaxy*



*Star Wars:
Heroes of the Force*



*Star Wars:
Lords of the Sith*



*Star Wars Insider
Special Edition 2020*



*Star Wars Insider
Special Edition 2019*



*Star Wars Insider
Special Edition 2018*



*Star Wars Insider
Special Edition 2017*



*Star Wars Insider
Special Edition 2016*

STAR WARS
INSIDER
SOUVENIR
SPECIALS

AVAILABLE IN ALL GOOD STORES AND ONLINE
TITAN-COMICS.COM



© & TM 2019 Lucasfilm Ltd.

